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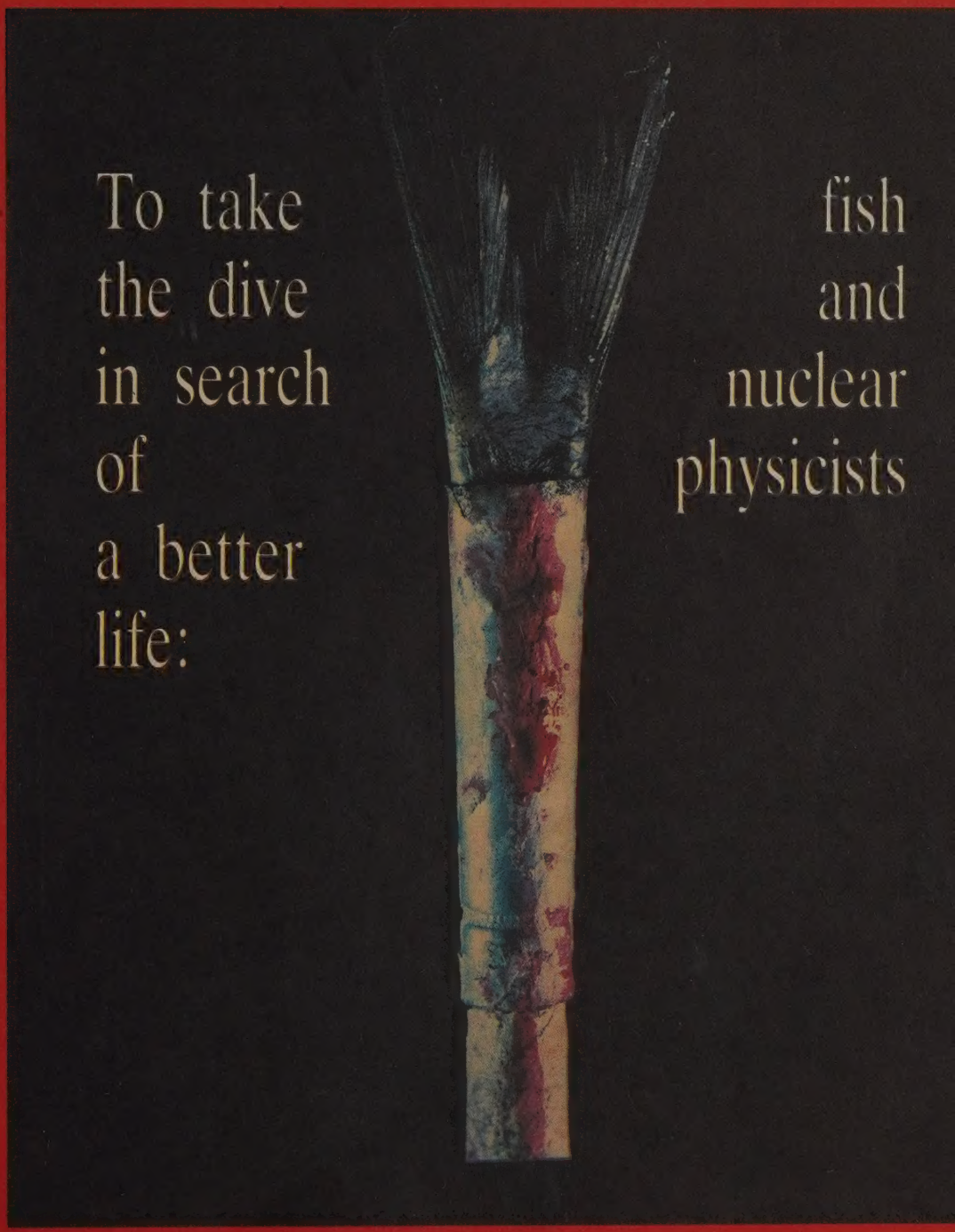

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From our mailbag

■ I read Soloveichik's article "Knock at my window" (No. 1/92). Indeed, there is an ideological vacuum. However, the void is always filled. Democrats are unable to combine their efforts. But other forces do not sit idle. The partocracy is not yielding, and is not going to yield. In the provinces it continues to rule the roost. Monuments to Lenin stand in squares, busts in public places, and portraits hang in nurseries and schools. It is, so to speak, the physical support of former ideology. As long as this situation remains people will never be sure that the old order will not be restored.

In Mordovia, meetings of its parliament outwardly resemble meetings of the regional party committee – the presidium on the dais and the bust of Lenin behind them. Our President was sworn in office and congratulated by a representative of the Church also against the background of Lenin's bust.

The church is also trying to fill in the ideological vacuity. As it was in the past, the church hierarchy is anxious to influence the powers that be. Priests call for humble poverty and teach young people to be slaves of God and in civil life – a cogwheel in the state machinery.

I.Poselennov,
war veteran,
Saransk, Mordovia

■ The Russian parliament's committee for international affairs has concluded that the decision to include the Crimea into Ukraine in 1954 was unconstitutional. It is a dangerous precedent.

In 1944 part of the Latvian territory was turned over to Russia. This was done as easily as, later, in the case of the Crimea. At a meeting of the Latvian parliament Vilis Lacis spoke about great Stalin and

Notes from a "drunk" house

■ I would like to share my experience with others and describe one working day of a professional fighter against hard drinking.

At nine o'clock in the morning we replace the tired fighters of the previous shift. We are anxious to "serve" as many clients as possible being conscious of the importance of our great cause. The more people we catch, the less vodka will be drunk and the more vodka will remain. The more vodka, the more "clients." A sort of perpetuum mobile.

Our real work begins at six o'clock in the evening, when tired people return from their factories and offices and, having saved several rubles on their dinner, find places where they could drink wine or vodka.

We do not search for stinky tramps hiding in basements and sexually assaulting our children. We do not hunt either after drunk hoodlums who commit crimes. What shall we do with a tramp? Neither collect a fine nor receive professional enjoyment.

There are drunk persons in restaurants. But they are well educated and have connections, and we can only get in trouble. The best way is to seize drunk persons near cheap bars and beer kiosks or in wine queues. And so our opportunity arises.

We choose a person dressed more or less decently and with a more or less intellectual face. It is good if he sharply argues with his boon companion and talks loudly. We quickly push him into the car before he understands anything. It is not important how much he has drunk. A medical worker is also a member of our team, and it is unlikely he will let the detained person go.

The reaction of the "client" is predictable. He begins to shout, expresses indignation and uses strong words, and then he does not want to take off his clothes, as we request. We quickly undress him by force and, with fists and feet, we help him lose consciousness. The "client" is stripped and placed in a ward. Some time later he recovers and begins to knock at the door, demands that he should be released, and does not feel ashamed to use strong language. Smilingly, we fill in a protocol and fine him 150 rubles. After we seize three to five such persons we can rest till morning. A good bargain.

It happens that we come across sturdy fellows. They express endless indignation at our professionalism. It is here that real work begins. However, we do not use our feet, for we could leave traces on his body. There are two ways to go which satisfy our professional convictions. The first, and the most easy way, is to set a "client" in the position of a swallow. We bind his hands and feet and tie them behind his back. After staying in such a position for an hour any "client" forgets even his name. The other way is more "intellectual." We place a person in an armchair and tie his arms by straps to the elbow-rests. It gives us pleasure to see how a person wriggles. He shouts obscene words of which "fascist" is the mildest. All this is recorded in a protocol.

In the morning we offer the "client" to sign the protocol and warn him that if he does not pay the fine we shall send an appropriate paper to his place of work. The poor "client" runs home, takes the last money from his family and brings it to us. How can he refuse? He used obscene words, put up resistance, and was drunk – everything is recorded in the protocol. So he is an enemy of the people. Such people must be treated mercilessly, we say at the moment of parting. This final phrase in the struggle against hard drinking helps us understand our important place in the law-governed state.

I shall not give you my name and surname, for otherwise I can find myself in the position of a "client" for divulging the professional secret. But I shall tell you where such things happen. It is the town of Bezhetsk in the Tver Region. I think they will be unable to guess who wrote this letter, because I shall leave my work soon. I have become an over-qualified professional, now I can land a job anywhere.

Who will fill in an ideological vacuum?

Reviving Trotsky's ideas

If you want the Crimea back, return the territory captured from Latvia

THE WAY I SEE IT

Drawing by Victor Bogorad

the valiant Red Army, and then the "servants of the people" voted for all the decrees simultaneously. Under one of the decrees the town of Abrene and six small rural areas of the Abrene district were to be transferred to the Pskov region of the Russian Federation.

Following the Russian parliament, the Latvian parliament has concluded that this decree is unconstitutional. The annexation of a part of the Latvian territory took place in conditions of its occupation, and the border between Latvia and Russia must be determined, as before, by the peace treaty of 1920.

Sergei Sviridov
Riga, Latvia

■ A new Trotskyite newspaper *Rabochaya Borba* (Workers' Struggle) has been launched in our city which is famous for its glorious revolutionary traditions. It proclaims slogans: "Stand up for the ideas of Lenin and Trotsky" and "For a militant proletarian party."

The newspaper expresses the interests of those who advocate the ideas of revolutionary Marxism, that is, Trotskyism. The leaders of the democratic movement – Yeltsin and Sobchak – are labelled by this newspaper as "bourgeois-democratic riff-raff." With the assistance of this new revolutionary periodical, revolutionary proletarian cells are being formed in the city. They "represent an international revolutionary Communist organization which is guided in its activity by the theoretical legacy of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky." The newspaper and Communist cells call for a proletarian and then world revolution. Their goal is a communist society and boycotts, strikes, the seizure of enterprises and a general strike are the main methods of their struggle.

The main slogan remains the same, the painfully familiar call "Workers of all countries, unite!"

Vadim Sokolov
St. Petersburg

■ I read Lyubarsky's article about Gorbachev (No. 52/91). It is strikingly truthful. I would add this: for six years Gorbachev was running along the dike with a shovel, digging ditches and filling them with earth, whereas Yeltsin has taken the levers of a bulldozer and is clearing the way for future democracy. Yeltsin is John the Baptist.

Leonid Ionin always irritates me. I think he is an agent for some power. He constantly recarves the map of Russia and suffers from Russophobia. Tatiana Ivanova shares the pain of Russia. She is clever and kind. I do not understand readers who offend this tender Russian soul.

Yuri Popov
Maikop

Compiled by
Tatiana Chernova

The navy is too expensive for Russia

■ I think the future of the army is today the most painful and topical subject. It has been stated that "The Black Sea Fleet has been and remains Russian." No mention of what the servicemen of the navy (not only the Black Sea Fleet) need most of all. They need to be fed and clothed, and not only commanded. Moreover, the Black Sea Fleet has been built not by admirals Kornilov, Istomin and Ushakov, but by the sweat and blood of the Ural workers, Siberian lumberjacks, Ukrainian farmers and Uzbek cotton growers. Is it possible to estimate the contribution of each republic to the building of the navy?

My two sons served in the army at the height of the Afghan war. They were lucky, because they were not sent to this slaughter. Nevertheless, one returned home with terrible wounds on his back, and the other with a mental trauma. Criminals who return from prison recall their stay in it more often and willingly than my sons (and not only they) recall their military service.

Our army is completely demoralized. God forbid an armed conflict breaks out and servicemen in the army will begin to examine who has offended whom. This is well understood by all ordinary people, and is not understood only by generals, whom we have more of in Moscow than in the whole world. We need a professional army. This issue was raised long ago. Democrats are in power, but no practical steps are taken. Generals fear that they will be left redundunt while politicians are afraid that they will have to think of how to provide 18-year-old lads with training, work and housing. It is simpler, of course, to send the socially dangerous young people to the army, for there will be no problems then.

I voted for the Union and a united army. But since the USSR broke up by virtue of objective reasons I welcome Ukraine's decision to build its own army, and would welcome a similar decision on the part of Belarus (Byelorussia). If Kravchuk's statement that Ukraine will have a professional army, of a smaller size, is not merely a declaration, I fully support this decision, for Ukraine undertakes the provision of work and housing for retired servicemen. True, one cannot always believe the statements of our politicians.

I deeply believe that Russia, Ukraine and Belarus will again merge into a united state and that the army will also become united. In our country there are absolutely no grounds for the Yugoslav variant. Such grounds can be created only by irresponsible statements of politicians, like the statement about the Black Sea Fleet. I have learned that the concentration of troops in Belarus exceeds reasonable limits three times over. The question of withdrawing two thirds of the troops has been raised. They can be located only in Russia, not in Georgia or Armenia, of course. Can a poor Russia (compared even with Belarus or Ukraine) feed and clothe such an army? Why then lay claim to the fleet? Political ambitions are unnecessary.

B.Serak
Gomel Region, Belarus

EMERGENCY

New Times is also money!

Early last October our editorial offices received a note from the Procurator's Offices of Moscow's Frunzensky District. It said that one of our contributors, KGB Lt.Col. Alexander Kichikhin was accused of libel and that the said Offices were checking up on the complaint, which had been submitted by one Yuri Kobyakov, a KGB officer who had been on the USSR President's staff.

In its No. 39 for last year, the first issue to come out after the August putsch, our journal carried Alexander Kichikhin's contribution, headed "The KGB knew everything and acted accordingly." The author described the structure of the state security agencies and related the history of its departments, which in his view could have been directly involved in preparing and conducting the August putsch and in providing its "ideological cover." He claimed that these were Department "Z" – or the former Directorate Five and the Department of Information and Analysis of the KGB. When describing the staff, he mentioned Yuri Kobyakov.

Now this man wants Alexander Kichikhin prosecuted in line with Article 130 of the Russian Federation Criminal Code, which specifies libel in the press coupled with the accusation of treachery, a state crime. What citizen Kobyakov objects to is the rubric which covered all three contributions in the relevant *New Times* issue, headed "Who prepared the coup" and also the bold-type printing of his name, which in his view suggested a visual connection with the heading and the rubric.

When singling out Kobyakov's name and furnishing his biographical particulars in that section of the contribution, which did not refer to the putsch, the editors and the author stressed the connection between the CPSU Central Committee and the KGB, more specifically its Directorate Five, which also linked up with the USSR President's staff to which Kobyakov had been transferred from Staraya Ploshchad. (See inset on p. 5).

The activities of the presidential staff are deserving separate investigation. Still not absolutely clear are the functions that Boldin's service discharged. The documents and other matter published in the press show that this service deliberately misinformed Gorbachev, thus giving him a distorted idea of what was really taking place in the country. (See inset on p.6).

A KGB officer who had been on the USSR President's staff is suing our journal for the sum of 960,000 rubles in compensation for alleged affront to honour and dignity

Department "Z" in action

The issue presenting the editorial inquiry was put to bed on August 27. On September 1, in conformity with orders issued by KGB Chairman Vadim Bakatin, a special commission initiated the official inquiry into the activities during the coup of officials of the USSR KGB agencies.

This body found that not only Vladimir Kryuchkov, but also all his deputies, as well as all the heads of Department "Z" had been directly involved in a state crime consisting of an attempted coup.

According to the evidence this body accumulated, Col.Gen. Victor Grushko, the KGB Chairman's First Deputy, time and again attended meetings with the future State Emergency Committee

From the plaintiff's dossier

Yuri Kobyakov graduated from a commercial college and worked for a time at a shop before joining the KGB staff in the mid-1970s. From the mid-1980s on he handled the Crimean Tartar problem in the former Fifth Department. He authored the Mubarek Zone programme to keep the Crimean Tartars in Uzbekistan.

In a meteoric rise, he was appointed chief of the section on inter-ethnic relationships. Upon graduation from the Higher Party School of the CPSU Moscow City Committee, he took over in 1988 from Alexander Karbainov (who prior to the putsch had been the KGB public relations chief) within the CPSU Central Committee section for administrative bodies. He joined the USSR President's staff after the institution of the presidency.

Kichikhin says that everyone in the Directorate Five was amazed at Kobyakov's sudden rise, "not because they envied him, but because they believed only people with the appropriate qualifications should serve in the top bodies of government."

Currently Kobyakov awaits a new appointment.

(SEC) members, meanwhile his aide drafted "the initial measures for stabilizing the situation in the country in the event of the promulgation of a state of emergency." The self-same Grushko issued crucial commands for taking advantage of KGB opportunities to implement the plotters' designs. Thus he enjoined that a plan be drafted to isolate the Russian Federation President, activate the special units of the KGB Central Directorate One and tighten the screws in Gosteleradio.

Genii Ageyev, another first deputy of the KGB Chairman, directed operations on Foros. He ordered the USSR President's communications to be disconnected, and also had the 79th Border Guard Detachment and the Fifth Separate Coastguard Brigade boats subordinated to Yuri Plekhanov, chief of the KGB Security detail. He likewise instructed that the Russian Federation White House be isolated so that the Russian leadership and the more democratically-minded deputies be eventually interned. Finally, he had a team of operatives formed and dispatched to the Baltics to ensure an emergency situation regime there.

On August 18 yet Maj.Gen. Lebedev, a deputy chairman, ordered some of the USSR and Russian Federation leaders to be shadowed. He directly commanded that the forces of the Department "Z" wherein during his first few years of work in the KGB he had handled the drive against Zionism, and of the Directorate Seven, be activated. The operatives of these two departments apprehended Gdlian, Urazhtsev, Proselkov and Komchatov. During the putsch, Lebedev, who in the KGB had set up its Department of Information and analysis, of which he had at one time been chief, detailed a group to back up with information an emergency regime, supervised the drafting and circulation of SEC documents, kept an eye on the mass media and resolved to shut down the Moscow Echo radio station.

On the eve of the putsch, Lt.Gen. I.Petrovas, deputy KGB Chairman, placed the special-purpose groups on a heightened alert and circulated among KGB agencies and troops instructions specifying how they should conduct themselves and what they should do during a state of emergency. In collaboration with the USSR Defence Ministry, he directed troop movements in Moscow and dispatched 300 personnel of the 103rd Paratroop Division to the Baltics.

As for the Directorate Five, or Department "Z," a special inquiry was instituted into its activities, as both before and during the putsch, in the upshot of which a special document was drawn up, entitled "Official Inquiry Indicates Unlawful Activities of Officials of the USSR KGB Department 'Z' Before and During the Anti-Constitutional Coup."

The said document shows that most of the staff under Department Chief Vitaly Vorotnikov "executed the task of identifying at operative-covered installations the response to the SEC decision." On Sunday August 18, twenty-five department staff members were summoned to Lubianka, handed out Makarov pistols and 16 cartridges and identity cards; split up into three separate teams, they were dispatched respectively to Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia "to control the objective character of the information amassed by local state security agencies as to the situation in the Baltics supposedly in connection with the impending signing of the Union Treaty."

By 10 p.m. on that same Sunday, remaining department staff formed a group that was to place under administrative arrest all who in their chief's view could "destabilize the situation in Moscow" during the promulgation of an emergency situation. Department's chief Vitaly Vorotnikov subsequently explained that on the morning of August 19 he had been furnished with a list of 75 or 76 persons, who were to be apprehended and had relayed this list to his deputy Gennady Dobrovolsky, a name that was likewise presented in bold type in Alexander Kichikhin's contribution. On this list 18 names were singled out. Dobrovolsky alleged that he had destroyed this list on August 21.

From the defendant's dossier

In December 1990 *New Times* unequivocally backed Eduard Shevardnadze's dramatic claim as to the danger of a dictatorship.

In January 1991 *New Times* called for a political and legal assessment of the Vilnius bloodbath, contending that otherwise tanks would soon roll up outside Moscow homes and the country would come under a "dictatorship of greyness."

In June 1991 *New Times* pressed for the resignation of KGB Chairman Vladimir Kryuchkov, who had demanded emergency powers for the government and who had in effect come out against the country's President at a closed session of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

On August 20, 1991 *New Times* put to bed its issue, that opened with the heading "They staged a putsch, but their hands are trembling." The edition was confiscated at the printshop, but xeroxed copies of the issue were circulated around Moscow.

From the defendant's dossier

New Times has been familiar with **Alexander Kichikhin** from 1990. Having amassed evidence that the Communist Party apparatus in the Volga area was building up a negative attitude to Soviet Germans and the restoration of their autonomy, he realized that he would not be able to change the emerging situation in that area by "usual means" and so demonstrated with a poster by the tent township outside Hotel *Rossiya,* after which he was, in effect, removed from office in his Directorate.

On the morning of August 19, 1991, he came to our editorial offices with copies of his resignation letter and an appeal to men of the armed forces not to use force, not to come out against the people and not to back the SEC's unconstitutional activities.

"I spent eight years with Kobyakov in one room at Lubianka," he says, "and least of all sought to cause him personal affront or charge him with treachery. I simply wanted to furnish a picture of the Directorate in which we both had been working."

Igor Perfiliev, another Department "Z" deputy chief, was told by Valery Lebedev to notify the heads of Moscow printshops that the issue of a number of newspapers and magazines was to be temporarily suspended.

There is no question that special hopes were placed on Department "Z" during the putsch and that it was on this Department that the KGB heads relied in the attempt to seize power. An identical conclusion follows likewise from the evidence assembled by the special commission conducting the official inquiry. However, the commission did not investigate the role played by officers on the active reserve who had been, for instance, on the USSR President's staff, or who had been "under cover" in the other departments and ministries of the USSR or the various republics.

Incidentally, when putting the issue to bed on August 27 our editorial staff could only conjecture what had really happened during the putsch in the KGB from the facts that KGB Lt.Col. Alexander Kichikhin of Department "Z" had furnished.

"Prosecution denied"

In response to the inquiry from the District Procurator's Office, our editorial offices compiled the following letter:

"*New Times* is analyzing the causes of the processes that resulted in the putsch and its consequences.

"More specifically, in our issue No. 35 for 1991 we carried a collection of materials on the subject under the common rubric of 'Who prepared the coup.' It referred to the organizations that had plotted the coup in August last year, which we believe include the KGB, the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Defence Ministry.

"Under the heading 'The KGB knew evereything. And acted accordingly,' the contributor Alexander Kichikhin of the staff of the USSR State Security Committee presented his own analysis of the structures, activities and atmosphere in the KGB on the eve of and during the putsch. From our point of view, the information he adduced appeared sufficiently objective. Doubtlessly, other views are possible. Our issue was put to bed on August 27, when the inquiry had been just initiated. It later transpired that an inquiry had been instituted against some of the persons named in this material. However, no charges had been levelled in the material 'The KGB knew everything. And acted accordingly' against any definite persons,

WITNESSES FOR THE DEFENCE ACCUSE

A note for the President

Lev Ponomaryov,
Russian Federation People's Deputy, Chairman of the Parliamentary Commission for Inquiry into the Causes and Circumstances of the August 1991 Coup

In effect, the KGB, equally with the CPSU, led last August coup. This was one integrated body, wherein the State Security agencies, moreover, employing armed force, did the bidding of the CPSU Central Committee.

Concentrated within the KGB was the entire leverage for administrating and influencing the state. More specifically, the KGB controlled the information retailed to the President, Parliament and government. The KGB indoctrinated the public.

As for the pressure that was exerted on the President, I may adduce one simple instance. Alexander Yakovlev told me that shortly before March 28, 1991, when combat vehicles rolled through Moscow, he had seen on Gorbachev's desk a report from the KGB, which said that its agent had been at a meeting of a cooperative supposedly under Democratic Russia, which had allegedly discussed the manufacture of rope ladders and hooks for storming the Kremlin. In my capacity as one of the heads of Democratic Russia and as an organizer of the March 28 demonstration, I know beyond all doubt that we did not have, and could not have, any plans for storming the Kremlin, as all talk of the forcible overthrow of the existing authority was out of question. Apart from that, we have no cooperatives. Gorbachev's entourage was infiltrated with KGB agents. He was subjected to influence and attempts were made to distort his views.

Involved in the attempted coup were virtually all State Security divisions with the currently dissolved Directorate Five dominating its preparation.

Kryuchkov personally undertook to direct all KGB operations. Distrusting the heads of the divisions, he personally telephoned every single executor, moreover, from Yanayev's office. He sought by telephone to control everything, even the most trifling operation, while during the putsch he even eavesdropped on the telephone conversations of Yanayev and Pavlov. This all demonstrates once again that the KGB chairman personally held the "controlling packet" during the coup.

СТЕПЕНЬ СЕКРЕТНОСТИ Секретн

Экз. № 28 –

ИСХОДЯЩАЯ ШИФРТЕЛЕГРАММА № 22732/318

Председателям КГБ республик
Начальникам Управлений КГБ СССР по краям и областям.

Начальникам Управлений Особых отделов КГБ СССР и Особых отделов КГБ СССР по округам, флотам, объединениям и соединениям центрального подчинения.

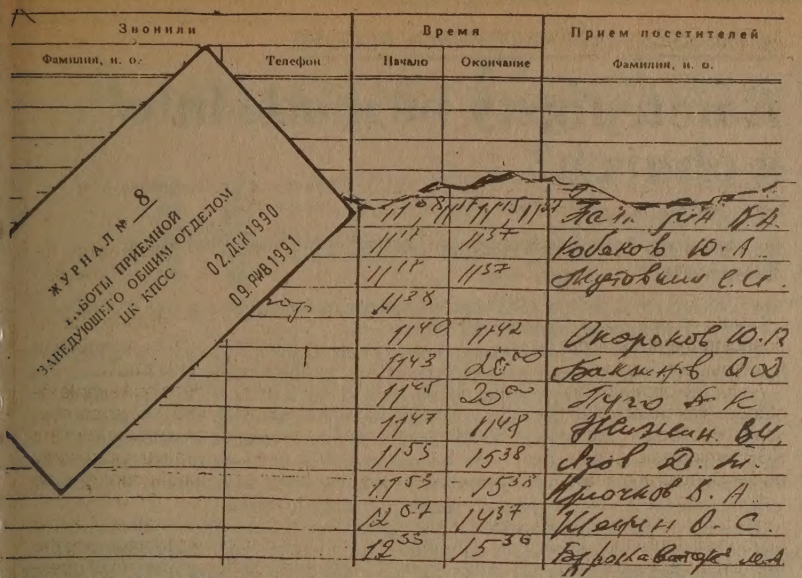
Начальникам войск пограничных округов КГБ СССР, Начальникам главных управлений, самостоятельных управлений и отделов КГБ СССР.

Командирам соединений и отдельных частей войск КГБ СССР.

С получением данной телеграммы органы и войска КГБ СССР перевести в состояние повышенной боевой готовности.

КРЮЧКОВ

The KGB was the directing force behind the putsch. Vladimir Kryuchkov's encoded telegram to place troops on a full-scale alert



In our issue No. 5, which featured an article on how the coup was hatched for Lithuania in 1991, we reproduced part of a page from the register recorded by the aides of Valery Boldin, chief of the CPSU Central Committee department of general affairs. On the morning of January 8, KGB Chairman Kryuchkov, Defence Minister Yazov, Internal Affairs Minister Pugo and Central Committee Secretaries Shenin and Baklanov, in short, nearly the entire membership of the future SEC, met in Boldin's room to define Lithuania's lot and that same morning KGB officer Yuri Kobyakov, then on the USSR President's staff, visited Boldin in his room

including more specifically Y.A. Kobyakov.

"Y.A. Kobyakov may, naturally, state his view in a letter to the editors, which we could carry, as is done in such cases."

In early November, we were furnished with the conclusion the Procurator's Office had drawn, in which A. Kichikhin was notified to the effect that, "citizen Y.A. Kobyakov's appeal to have you prosecuted for libel, coupled with the accusation of having committed a state crime, has been checked. Prosecution is denied as proceeding from Paragraph 2 of Article 5 of the Russian Federation Code of Criminal Procedure no corpus delicti is to be observed in your activities."

The appeal Yuri Kobyakov addressed to the Procurator's Offices of Moscow also got nowhere, inasmuch as a second check in November of this complaint reaffirmed that there was no slander whatever in the *New Times* article.

The conclusion drawn in respect of the results of the public Russian Federation Supreme Soviet hearings as to the role played by the repressive agencies in hatching and conducting a state coup in the USSR declares:

"Preparation of concrete measures to carry through a state coup was initiated in the KGB in December 1990. Thereupon the more militant personalities in the democratic movement were more intensively shadowed and steps were taken to discredit them. Deliberate misinformation at home and abroad was intensified, with all KGB subdivisions involved therein. The complete absence of government or parliamentary control over the activities of the state security agencies enabled them to play a most active part in the attempt to forcibly revert the state to a totalitarian regime and step up wholesale terror and repression in the country."

Civil suit begins

In mid-November Yuri Kobyakov addressed a letter to our editorial offices, demanding that it be carried in full without any editing on page 14 of our next issue and in the same type as A. Kichikhin's contribution. "In the text of my reply," Kobyakov wrote, "the name of A. Kichikhin must be given in bold type similarly as my name in his contribution." He continued: "The full text of my reply incorporates the heading 'AN OPEN LETTER TO A.PUMPYANSKY IN CONNECTION WITH THE SLANDEROUS PUBLICATION IN *NEW TIMES*, which must be presented similarly and with the same type as under the rubric WHO PREPARED THE COUP, which the editorial offices invented."

In his "Open letter," Yuri Kobyakov contended that in A. Kichikhin's contribution, with "the direct connivance of the editorial offices," an "absolutely bald and amazingly brazen-faced charge of 'complicity' in a state crime, that of treachery, a plot" had been levelled against him. "In this manner," he wrote, "*New Times* is degenerating to the level of the political denunciations of Stalinist times. Then such false accusations would have been sufficient to have me shot and my family stigmatized with that nightmarish abbreviation of MFT (Member of the family of a traitor)." He then said: "One hopes that today characters like A. Kichikhin will not be able to continue with impunity to engage in slander and political denunciation." After that he sought to convince our readers: "It is stupid to pay money, and no small amount at that, to those who take the liberty of issuing unpardonable lies, to those for whom the cynical grabbing of sensational stuff is more precious than a person's honour and dignity. That selfsame person about whose inalienable rights your 'elitist journal' so often writes with such pathos," he concludes.

In our reply to Yuri Kobyakov we said: "You are doubtlessly entitled to dispute the overall notion of KGB complicity in the conspiracy and A. Kichikhin's specific admission. But to do that proof is called for. What actually does not correspond to reality or is distorted? Sad to say, in your emotionally charged letter you fail to cite a single concrete argument."

The editors reaffirmed their prepared-

Though use of firearms is part of personnel training, the former KGB inculcated fear by other means

ness to feature a more or less substantiated point of view from the opponent, only if it dealt with the gist of the matter.

Thus far we have not received any reply from Yuri Kobyakov. On the other hand, the district law court sent us a copy of a statement dating December 2, 1991, in which citizen Y.A. Kobyakov defends his honour and dignity and demands compensation for moral damages. Getting nowhere in the attempt to have the *New Times* contributor prosecuted, Kobyakov has launched a civil suit against our editorial offices and Kichikhin.

"Basically why the KGB heads were among the chief ideologues and executors of anti-constitutional state coup," the conclusion drawn in respect of the parliamentary hearings concerned with the KGB, declares, "are as follows. Serving from the very outset as executors of the will and resolve of none other than the Communist Party leadership and taking for granted disregard of our own laws, the agencies of state security developed into an autonomous political factor within the CPSU and the state, becoming a supra-state institution. Throughout the entire history of the Soviet state, the State Security Agency from the VECHEKA to the USSR KGB served as the dominant repressive structure of the totalitarian regime, as an implement of genocide against its own people, that was directly responsible for wholesale crimes against humanity."

From the suit that Yiri Kobyakov instituted, it followed that he had taken as alluding to his own person not only the rubric and heading of A. Kichikhin's contribution, but also a sentence in the introduction, which runs: "The statement the Collegium of the State Security Committee has issued that some State Security agencies are dishonoured by involvement in the coup of the head of the USSR KGB (save the mark!), has as I see it the definite aim of shielding from responsibility the other ideologues and parties involved in the state crime. Who are they?" Proceeding from this sentence and mentioning once again the heading and rubric of the relevant article, Yuri Kobyakov indicated in his appeal to the law court that "the editors of the weekly *New Times* and A. Kichikhin have in a printed work wilfully spread slander that is a knowingly false invention discrediting my person, coupled with the charge against me of the gravest of state crimes, that of treachery in the form of a conspiracy seeking to seize power."

Kobyakov's rates of inflation

Kobyakov next wrote that by its publication, *New Times* had caused his family grievous moral damage, had discredited him in the eyes of friends and fellow workers, and had endeavoured to provoke administrative and criminal prosecution against him and complicate possible trips abroad (insofar as New Times is circulated not only in Russian, but also abroad). "The calumnious publication in *New Times* has caused me substantial moral harm as an honest law-abiding citizen, simply **a living person,** by riding roughshod over our society's proclaimed supreme value, **the honour and dignity of the human being,"** Yuri Kobyakov winds up the claims he puts to *New Times*.

He demanded that the editorial offices be obligated to publish the full text of his reply to A. Kichikhin's contribution, "The KGB knew everything. And acted accordingly," and to exact from *New Times* the sum of 240,000 rubles "to compensate for the moral (non-material) damage inflicted as the result of the publication of the article." He followed this up with the explanation that "I believe the said sum is on the one hand not excessive in view of galloping inflation, yet is on the other, weighty enough for the editors of *New Times* to well realize that slanderous publications irrevocably entail severe lawful penalties, while their continuation is fraught, apart from everything else, with the journal's financial bankruptcy."

For technical reasons the court did not sit on the designated day of February 6. However, the editors have been acquainted with an additional statement from citizen Kobyakov, who currently demands that *New Times* pay him 960,000 rubles for reasons of inflation. Could we call that the silver lining? Indeed, now, thanks to Yuri Kobyakov we know what Russia's inflation rates are really like.

The case is to be heard on March 24.

WITNESSES FOR THE DEFENCE ACCUSE

Can a pigsty be made into a church?

Sergei Kovalyov,
Russian Supreme Soviet Presidium member, Chairman of the Parliamentary Human Rights Committee

Those who thought the KGB was finished are mistaken. Sad to say, it continues, and this frightening machine still rolls on.

Leaders who fail to learn history's lessons naively think that a powerful negative factor may be "reorganized" and empoloyed to accomplish noble aims. However, this system was structured for definite objectives and that is all it can do. I have reason to believe that even today the KGB is working along the same old lines, moreover, not without success. Attempts to effect decisive changes, whether the elaboration of a new concept of state security or the unsealing of KGB archives, encounter viscuous resistance, as if one seeks to make a hole in putty by stabbing in a finger. The moment one removes one's finger, the putty resumes its original shape.

No KGB officer has yet appealed to the Human Rights Committee against discrimination from the new democratic authorities. Yet, there are very many complaints to the effect that democratically-minded officers are being elbowed out and that the men who ruled the roost in the 1970s and the 1980s are again in control.

Thus, I know one immediate adviser to Vice-President Rutskoi who had been a KGB interrogator handling dissident cases and dominant in the Yakir-Krasin case. He questioned Yakir's daughter Irina when she was still suckling her baby girl, and let her go for an hour and a half from the questioning process, as if she had been at work. Rutskoi admits that this same man, Pavel Alexandrovsky, attended a conference with the Vice-President, when the question of promulgating a state of emergency in Chechen was discussed.

Should we bring our judges to trial? I do not think that should be done, as otherwise we would never break the vicious circle of vengeance. For that matter, scarcely would a trial of that nature be unbiassed. Yet on the other hand, something must be done so that these erstwhile butchers not rear their heads again today and do what they did before, claiming that nobody had condemned or faulted them... In that sense the Parliamentary hearings were insufficient. I think it would be essential to conduct public Parliamentary hearings to examine the KGB's role and the doings of one or another of its Directorates, having concrete evidence presented and with counsels for the defence obligatorily in attendance. Such hearings in Russia could play the same role that de-nazification, a process that turned German mentality around, played in post-war Germany.

If we want to introduce something like the KGB in its place, then we should really reform it as is now being done. But if we want something entirely different, we may use nothing but the **bricks** of the KGB edifice. We cannot remake a pigsty into a church by erecting a belfry over it. A pigsty will always remain a pigsty. We must dismantle it right down to the very bottom, and then use the bricks for whatever we please.

A minor Commonwealth?

How does the new meeting of the CIS leaders in Minsk look against the background of the first one in December when the foundation of this new structure was laid? Has it brought its founding participants any closer to the "common military and monetary-financial space" which was declared as the priority task of the creation of the Commonwealth? So far only one thing is doubtless: the second meeting in Minsk has corrected practically all original stipulations of the CIS.

The main item on the programme of the Minsk meeting was military agreements – about the military budgets, the supreme command of strategic forces, the status of general purpose troops, and social guarantees for the military. Eight republics out of the eleven agreed on having a unitary supreme command – these don't include Ukraine, Moldova and Azerbaijan. Two out of the eight – Belarus and Uzbekistan – intend to create their own armed forces, though they don't oppose creating a unitary command for the time being.

Marina Shakina

Russia has declared that it will be the last of the republics to create its own armed forces. Earlier it said the same concerning its own currency, though after long hesitations. So what is the outcome? The CIS confirms a two-level integration in whose framework the six countries which have agreed to have a unitary army are a "minor CIS" of a sort – in all likelihood, not very stable one either. In any case, the actions of political leaders show that they are ready to retreat at any moment. The common military space proved to be a myth. Minsk-2 has summed up all the events of the two last months and closed the history of the Soviet Army. Only a month ago it was an army without a state. Today it is no more at all.

On January 16 the Commonwealth states made a declaration in Moscow which, for instance, included the following clause: "No restrictions are allowed concerning permanent residency of servicemen in the place of service on the territory of the Commonwealth states..." Today Ukraine declares that all privates and sergeants drafted from other former republics must leave Ukraine before June 1. The elements of "ukrainization" are bound to grow in the near future – particularly demonstrative is the case of the Ukrainian food aid sent to a garrison in Estonia – for the Ukrainians only.

On the contrary, Azerbaijan is **now** ready to welcome anyone, which is easily explained by the Karabakh war. However, one thing remains unexplained: what must be the attitude to this war of the "minor CIS" sixsome which is going to have joint armed forces (including Armenia)? And what will be the relations between the joint army of the "minor CIS" and Azerbaijan which is also a member of the Commonwealth though having its own army?

A rather dangerous spontaneous migration has started in the Soviet Army – six crews unwilling to swear allegiance to Kiev flew to Moscow together with their aircraft and the unit's banner. Officers from all over the former USSR send letters to Kiev expressing their desire to serve in Ukraine. The reverse stream of applications comes from Ukrainian cities. It won't be surprising soon to find in newspapers ads for exchanges in place of service. Sixty seven percent of officers are confident that the creation of national armies is unavoidable.

As the recent meeting in Minsk shows, the CIS is a half-civilized form of divorce; it can't be called civilized since unilateral decisions, including those of an immediate swearing-in and nationalization of army property, are taken. Yet so far it has been possible to avoid the worst. A conflict between Yeltsin and Kravchuk over the Black See Fleet and the Crimea was universally expected. However, Russia's President avoids all disputable issues and everything that might resemble an isolation on the part of Russia, its separation from others. He does not fail to emphasize every now and then: "We will create our own army and currency and delimit our borders only if forced to."

The main result of Minsk-2: the Soviet Army becomes a thing of the past

Russia's President will soon be subjected to public and parliamentary criticism for his failure to defend Russia's interests. It will cost him a lot of effort to prove that restraint is in Russia's interests.

Russia's role in the CIS is a topic for a separate discussion. It fails to be "equal." Moscow will remain the main object of accusations of imperial chauvinism and attempts to restore the empire. Russian leaders, as formerly the Union ones, confuse the notions of Russia and the Commonwealth. Yeltsin says that the Fleet must belong to the CIS, meaning by the latter Russia. He speaks in the United Nations about new disarmament initiatives on behalf of the CIS, meaning Russia. Even his dissociating himself from the separatist tendencies in the CIS is indicative of the same. On the other hand, all attempts made by the Russian parliament to adopt the positions of Russian nationalism and pursue only Russia's interests are extremely negatively reacted to by the other CIS members.

It becomes clear after the second meeting in Minsk that the former republics are going to have their own armies and, probably, national currencies. If so, the conversion of the former USSR internal administrative borders into state ones will be unavoidably carried out in accordance with the norms of international law.

"Better to die at

Azerbaijan President Mutalibov's sudden departure from the CIS Minsk Summit bewildered many. Does this mean he really thought military communiqués menacing?

Below **Anatoly Shabad,** a member of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet, but recently back from Nagorny Karabakh, presents his assessment in a *New Times* interview

– Apparently the pull-out of internal troops from Karabakh has greatly exacerbated the situation.

– Until recently, the Armenians were generally able to repulse localized attacks from Azerbaijanian forces. Thus they regained the summer-depopulated villages in the Gadrut neighbourhood and ousted Azerbaijan units from the village of Hojavend, from which the district seat of Martuni had been methodically shelled (which is now shelled from the village of Amiranlar). Hojavend, sad to say, has no more residents, as the war caused them to flee. On January 14, after two days of shelling, a massive assault was mounted. The Azerbaijanians broke into the town and occupied its fringe, only to be shortly ousted. On January 19 a howitzer shell exploded in a cellar where nine people had taken refuge and all were killed.

– Who were they?

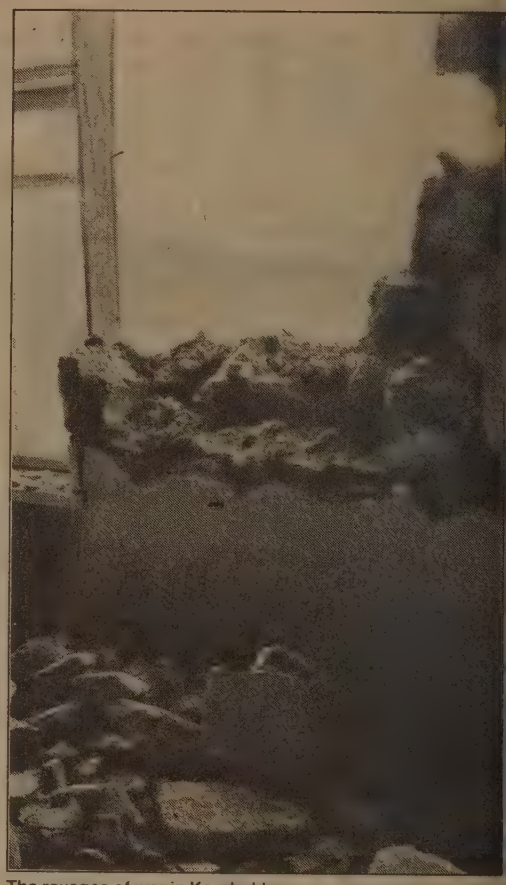
– Women and children, who spend the night in cellars to which they take their children. Meanwhile, the men congregate in groups outside and amuse themselves by timing shell trajectories by flash and explosion.

– Do you know anything about the use of the Grad ordnance?

– It fired 24 shells at Shaumianovsk. One pierced the roof of the former district Party committee shattering all windows, and cracking the ceiling. It then continued on, hit a tree, exploded and killed a little girl with the scattered splinters. In another case a man was killed some 40 metres away from where the shell actually exploded. Taking this distance as the killing radius, we find that one Grad salvo kills over a total area of at least twelve hectares. Even a hundred metres away from the explosion point, a splinter pierced a 10-centimetre thick plank. In another place the explosion lifted a car five metres high into the air and banged it against a house, with so much force that the car axles dented the stone wall; the car itself was totally crushed. This, let alone that all windows are shattered within a 100-metre radius and all the horrow the shelling generates.

– It was reported in the press, on television and even by Radio Liberty that Azerbaijanian villages are bombarded by Grad ordnance.

– That is a lie. The helicopter crash over Shusha provoked a major offensive from Azerbaijan.



The ravages of war in Karabakh

Alexei Akopian was hospitalized in Stepanakert with serious injuries to his back. However, there is a chronic shortage of medicine and bandages

From the diary of an eyewitness

January 18. *In Askeran I saw a ten-year-old Azerbaijanian boy named Ramil, who is in the sixth form in school, who had been kept hostage for more than a month. He said he liked it there and that if his father were with him, he would prefer to live there.*

January 19. *Ramil was exchanged for Valera Shamirian, whose face and arms carried traces of cigarette burns. He was obviously not in his right mind.*

January 20. *Roma Arakelian told me that on January 1 he had seen riot troopers torturing a neighbour, whom they killed after incising a cross in his chest.*

home...”?

Without properly preparing the attack and employing all available forces, including riot troops, the national army and all armour commanded by Heaven knows whom, Mutalibov sought to somehow demonstrate decisiveness. Tremendous damage was thereby inflicted on the Armenians with the village of Khramort completely destroyed. The Azerbaijanians themselves suffered heavy losses. In Khramort, several old men were brutally murdered, which is what usually happens, as old people are either unable to escape in time or deliberately stay on, as since they know they will die, they think it better to die at home.

At the same time the Azerbaijanians mounted a massive assault on Karintak, the sole Armenian village in the Shusha district, which, moreover, is hard by Shusha itself.

Today Askeran is the primary target of Azerbaijanian attacks. If it is seized, Stepanakert will be cut off from Northern Karabakh. In this direction the Azerbaijanians are again suffering heavy losses. Apart from losses in manpower, several of their armoured vehicles have been captured. I think this offensive will also be repulsed, firstly because it is in effect a compelled political action in response to the hysteria the helicopter crash generated that demands the Armenians be evicted.

– Azerbaijanian prisoners are reportedly cruelly treated. What do you know about that?

– I was in the delegation, that incidentally included Lady Caroline Cox, that visited them in the Stepanakert jail. A most depressing sight. Some eight prisoners were contained in an unheated cell with no clothes except those in which they had been captured. One did not even have a pea-jacket. Faces still bore traces of beating. They were not given any bread, with the explanation that there is a shortage of it in Stepanakert. They had no footwear or blankets. True, after our visit they were provided with some clothing, while a wounded officer was even operated upon. One prisoner died, but of what I still do not know.

– Yet the inhabitants of Stepanakert are themselves going hungry.

– With the exception of bread, Karabakh has enough in the way of food. It's a farming area and can supply itself with what is needed. However, there is no petrol with which to convey food to Stepanakert. Still that is no excuse not to feed prisoners.

Though because they are prisoners and one cannot take what they relate as unvarnished truth, it is worth while listening to what they have to say. They say they were all recruited in November and after but one month of training were dispatched to the fighting front. They noted that their commanding officer who was from the reserve had never really served in the armed forces. They pointed out that with enough money, one could buy oneself off, which seems to be true. Often sick people are drafted. One prisoner complained of a chronic lung malady.

– Who fights on the Armenian side?

– They too have many raw men, but there is an essential difference, as they are all volunteers. They comprise rather a militia than troops. But there are also local lads who have been fighting for some time now and they make very good soldiers. Of late the local population has been mobilized to dig trenches and serve as wardens.

– TV recently reported the case of a Black with a French passport who had been killed fighting for the Armenians. Do you know anything about that?

– Many fairy-tales are told, which either side touts.

– Still, what solution do you see? Could this be an autonomous Karabakh within Azerbaijan?

– Karabakh residents answered that question on December 10 when they voted for independence at their referendum. They have long made their choice. However, they still think they are in the Soviet Union and naively expect Yeltsin or perhaps the world community to take up the cudgels for them. You won't find a single Armenian in Karabakh today who would think they could go on living in Azerbaijan after all that has happened.

What worried me greatly is guaranteed rights for Azerbaijanians as well. Whoever the winner is, he will evict people of the opposite nationality and that is an objective reality. That can be averted only by introducing a UN or CIS peace-keeping force that would record the status quo and guarantee the existence of the Karabakh republic. People should live where they have been living, regardless of ethnic origin.

– Could troops be introduced into Karabakh legally without Azerbaijan's consent?

– Provided Karabakh is sufficiently well acknowledged it will not be necessary for Azerbaijan to agree to the introduction of troops. Recognition of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic represents a stepping stone to peace. Its existence is a fact, whose acknowledgement we must facilitate. I at any rate consider myself obliged to do that.

Interviewer:
Nikolai Kalinkin

From the diary of an eyewitness

January 21-25. *I spent these days in Stepanakert where there is still no electricity or water. Incidentally, water is supplied with such difficulty that one feels ashamed to drink tea. There is nothing food coupons can buy. There are already cases of bloated bellies from hunger. That night we were shelled from Malibeili and had to take refuge in a cellar. Stepanakert is reminiscent of the newsreels of Leningrad under siege, but thank God, there are no sledges to be seen on which people who died of hunger lie.*

January 31. *Khramort is ablaze, Farukh is shelled from heavy guns and four armoured vehicles. Hard by Khramort the fedayeen counted 24 armoured vehicles, 15 tanks, plus some dozen trucks and some 30 cars, in which marauders bide their time.*

One can see a convoy of trucks and armoured vehicles making for Askeran from Agdam. Khramort, Farukh and Askeran are ablaze. Khanabad is under fire.

I stood up to peep at Agdam from behind a rock. I could see electric lights there, but in Khramort houses and the granary were on fire.

In the morning we entered Khramort. Killed cows and pigs lie along the road. An old woman with her husband, an old man, prostrate across her breast lie huddled against a wall. When I visited them earlier, this miniature, fussy old lady had offered me tea, but I had no time to drink it. When I saw the traces of torture, I almost fainted. I still don't remember how I climbed down the stairs. A fedayeen was vomiting nearby. Firing again began. Marauders had come in to ransack loot-heaped cars that had been blown up. As I left the village, hostilities started anew.

Recorded by Angelica Chechina of the Memorial Association

Russian entrepreneur: the full and side view

Igor Bunin

They have no fear of risk, the fear of a government imployee

Between January and August of last year the number of Russian enterprises running on new economic principles more than tripled. According to rough estimates of Russia's State Committee for Statistics, about 3,500 enterprises not subordinate to any department, nearly 3,600 small businesses operated by private persons, and 4,000 cooperatives engaged in foreign economic activity were registered in August. The growth of these enterprises that form a new economy in the Russian Federation was given a strong impetus after the abortive coup.

Who manages enterprises of the new economy? The public and even progressive newspapers are absolutely sure that the new bourgeoisie is composed mainly of black marketeers and former high-placed bureaucrats. "One can recognize a former partocrat in a new entrepreneur and a black marketeer middleman," Moscow News wrote last September. This opinion is shared by Western journalists. Most of the cooperatives formed after 1987 served merely as a place for laundering the money of the state-run enterprises, Peter Gumbel of the *Wall Street Journal* comments.

Russian society is faced with the choice between "red managers," the present economic elite allegedly "capable of embracing the market philosophy," and private entrepreneurs most of whom are "Rothschilds engendered by the black market business of the Brezhnev period of stagnation and reared on the practically legal speculative business of the years of perestroika". "Natural" recommendations arise from this alternative: "The struggle against the special role of the economic elite in privatization is not only dangerous for the democratic movement but is also senseless." However, these recommendations are disproved by initial results obtained in the course of the "New Russian Entrepreneurs" project carried out by the Business Research Centre "Expertise". The project is financed by Tekhnobank, the Moscow Bank for the Promotion of Science and Technologies.

The social portrait

"Such a situation occurs once in 300 years: the old system, the old economy is breaking up and nobody knows how to build a new one," says Vladimir Sychev, who owns two broker's firms. "Those who have gained at least some intellectual potential have the unprecedented chance of becoming champions. They must urgently plunge into the market."

J.-B. Say gave a classical definition of the function of an entrepreneur. It is to combine the factors of production. In an economy run by command-style methods this function is exercised by old, traditional methods. Any innovation must first of all fit into the bureaucratic market structure. The new was only a result of gradual adaptations.

In the process of abolishing the command-style methods of economic management unusual tasks arose before the traditional economic subjects – the ministerial bureaucracy and the managers of state-owned enterprises, and also before dealers of the "shadow economy". The routine order and the usual operation of the economy came to an end, and it became impossible to go with the stream. A new type of economic agent is needed for the tackling of new problems. It was described by Joseph Schumpeter in his time. What is needed is an entrepreneur who devises new combinations in the form of new goods, new methods of production and management, and finds new markets. Most of the traditional economic subjects, who are unable to go against the stream, did not prove fit for the role of innovators.

In one of the interviews in the "New Russian Entrepreneurs" programme a top financial official now engaged in private business admitted the great advantage of those who came from other spheres. "Perhaps they are inferior to me as far as knowledge is concerned," he said. "However, I have the fear of risk in my blood. It is the fear of a government employee which I shall never overcome. But they are free of this fear."

The transition from the public service to private business called for a drastic change in the way of life and even in outlook. A large part of the managers of the state-run economy were not prepared for such a change. A survey conducted by the national Institute for the Study of Public Opinion revealed that even last year only 13 percent of respondents – managers of state-owned enterprises – were not averse to starting their own business. "Red managers" clearly prefer a guaranteed high pay to the staggering profit of an entrepreneur.

As a result, former economic managers are giving way to new businessmen whose mentality is free of traditions and inertia and who began to realize the opportunities that appeared in the economy in the course of perestroika.

Among 20 new entrepreneurs interviewed by the Expertise research centre, there was not a single dealer of the shadow economy or a former party official. Most of them are highly skilled engineers or scientific workers. Ten have the degree of candidate of sciences with six being candidates of physics and mathematics. Before perestroika they made successful careers in various research institutes or

Drawing by Ildus Azimov

the Academy of Sciences. On the one hand, in research institutes scientific workers could greatly distance themselves from the state. Sergei Vybornov, President of the Rosmedbank, recalls: "The best economic niche for a thinking man is a senior research associate. He earns enough for living and has enough independence to do what he likes." On the other hand, departing from the state system, scientists increasingly clashed with it. "How can one engage in research with the complete absence of a stimulus for creative scientific work?" asks G.Tosunyan, Chairman of the Board of the Tekhnobank.

In the Brezhnev period of stagnation it was impossible to create something original without going beyond the limits of the system, because the scientific and other fields were run by people suffering from senile imbecility. That is why when the chance to find interesting work opened up, the process of social and psychological reorientation began among active and relatively young scientific workers.

"I was well-off, but there was an idea of becoming independent of idiocy, the idiocy of old people who for unknown reasons held the posts of directors of research institutes," recalls Igor Fionin, Director-General of the scientific and producer association "Rimecs". "I left the institute of cybernetics and joined the sphere of free enterprises not for material reasons but because I had a certain potential which was in no way practically realized," Fionin went on. "It is simply necessary to go away from such people. It is senseless to fight against them. When you fight you do not work."

The process of reorientation was naturally easier among the intellectuals. However, its causes were the same among other sections of the population. For instance, Vyacheslav Kozyritsky, who established the agro-industrial firm Volna, left his work in a respectable restaurant, because he "felt constrained by the lack of freedom". Why should I follow the instructions of other people if my intuition prompts me that it would be more interesting to do something in a quite different way?" he asks. "I was persecuted for the ideas I suggested at the clothes factory, and so I understood I had to go and start my own business from scratch," says Ilya Baskin, who has opened several children's clothes factories in Petersburg.

The new class of entrepreneurs is shaping quite differently than the post-communist political elite. Most of them are aged between 27 and 45, whereas most politicians came from people who became active in the 1960s, those who hoped to "untie themselves while remaining within the system," as distinct from entrepreneurs, who wanted to go away from it. Thus, politicians and entrepreneurs continue different traditions. The former seem to have revived the romantic hopes of the 1960s while the latter, mostly former scientific workers, decided to go over to practical work. Politicians still believe in the effectiveness of programmes, new ideas and doctrines, whereas entrepreneurs – judging from practically all interviews – deny an "architectural" approach to the world and count only on their own forces, on the internal resources of the individual.

The spirit of enterprise

The first wave of private enterprise in the Soviet Union was raised mainly by people who were opposed to the system or regarded themselves outside it psychologically. Vladimir Yakovlev, son of Yegor Yakovlev (former editor of *Moscow News* and current Chairman of the Radio and Television Committee), tried out the role of a housing broker and "suddenly ceased to feel himself a part of the system". "I existed outside the system for a year," he says, "and this proved enough to understand that I and the system are not the same."

The most adventurous of these entrepreneurs organized cooperatives. By that time society had thrown away many of its myths and binding concepts. It became less collectivist and more rational. During the years of perestroika the institutions and symbols of socialism have been completely discredited. In fact, there was no alternative to the "spirit of capitalism".

While the former elite retained political power and control over the news media it was able, to some extent, to mobilize public opinion against cooperatives. But in fact this was a rearguard action. In 1991, after three years of ideological resistance to cooperatives, society accepted private enterprise, banks, exchanges and even "clubs of millionaires."

This period also saw a second wave of private enterprise. By all indications, the second generation of businessmen is less adventurous. It consists of entrepreneurs for whom the preceding period was too complicated, risky and uncertain. Speaking about the reasons of his entering the business at a later time (May 1990) the afore-mentioned Sergei Vybornov, President of the Rosmedbank, pointed out: "The most courageous, desperately courageous people rushed into the cooperative movement, having no firm backing behind them. The potential entrepreneurs of the second generation, seeing that the movement was developing without victims, also began to join it gradually, with a lesser speed."

Conditions are appearing for the emergence of a third wave of private enterprise. The businessman is becoming a hero of our time. Almost 70 percent of industrial workers approached in a poll held last summer characterized an entrepreneur as a "working man" and only 19 percent gave a negative reply. Respondents preferred to describe an entrepreneur as a "businessman" and "boss" rather than as an "exploiter," "smart dealer," "swindler" and so on. Boris Paramonov, a political scientist, noted that an entrepreneur became a legitimate member of society.

According to the data of the Moscow bureau of the national Insutute for the Study of Public Opinion, 13 percent of Muscovites said they were going to start their own business. Entrepreneurship becomes a sort of vogue. Even those who do not have the makings of an entrepreneur are anxious to join business. The spirit of enterprise is particularly strong among young peopple: 19.4 percent respondents aged 25 to 35 years and 25.9 percent respondents aged 18 to 24 said they were going to launch their business. The boys now washing car windows when drivers stop at road traffic lights may become the dominant force in the Russian economy early in the 21st century.

Motives and morals

"A typical entrepreneur never thinks whether his efforts will bring him sufficient compensation in the form of 'greater enjoyment'. He is little concerned about the hedonistic results of his labour. He works without rest, because he cannot do otherwise. The goal of his life is not to take pleasure in what he achieves. If he has such a desire, it is not a stop on the way but a symptom of paralysis, not the achievement of the goal but the harbinger of physcial death," the above-mentioned Schumpeter contends.

The striving for profit is the necessary condition of a market economy and an indispensable streak in the psychology of an entrepreneur. "One should be able to find gold where a hundred people have passed and noticed nothing," says Igor Fionin, head of the above-mentioned Rimecs Association. "If you took up banking you must love money," Tosunyan asserts.

The emphasis on money is materialized in the accumulation of capital, not in the growth of personal boons. The amount of profit is only an indication of success and a symbol of victory. The satisfaction of material needs was not a dominant motive even among Russian entrepreneurs of the first generation. Some of them were not very interested in personal boons from the very beginning. Others quickly achieved the amount of profit the exceding of which reduced the value of new material boons to zero. "The problem of personal interest is very acute only when you are on the verge of economic security," Fionin notes. "When your material position exceeds this limit, when you feel that you are economically safe, this problem does not interest you any longer."

Regardless of the sphere of activity, the form of property and the social status, the striving for personal freedom and independence from bureaucratic guardianship is the dominant motive of our entrepreneurs, just as of Western employers. Boris Katsev, Cand.Sc.(Technology), who founded an innovation technical firm at the age of 67, says: "When I gained economic freedom, life became very interesting, as though I live a second life."

This freedom is regarded as the supreme value which new entrepreneurs are ready to defend with weapons in their hands. "I shall return into the state sector only if I am sentenced to work at a timber-felling camp," said Dr. Y.Vorontsov a Surgeon, who founded a medical cooperative.

Other motives are most often closely linked with the desire to be independent of the surrounding world. First of all, it is the desire to found a private company which would give free reign and the feeling of power. For instance, the above-mentioned Ilya Baskin (children's clothes factories) wants to increase his turnover from 250 million to two billion rubles within two years and "have an opportunity to spit on the Mayor's office and this stinky state."

Widely spread is the concept of a gambler (using the word of American sociologist M.Maccoby) who is mainly interested in the solution of new problems, in creative work. "For me business is largely a play of mind and emotions or, in other words, is not something routine, ordinary work," says Oleg Yevdokimenko, director of the joint enterprise "Digitizer." The desire to fight and achieve success for the sake of success is also typical of a gambler. "I do my business to spite everyone," Baskin says.

By their social and psychological character new entrepreneurs do not resemble profiteers anxious to snatch a large sum of money or robbers who have no moral scruples. Of course, in an immoral society you cannot expect entrepreneurs to be saints, says Vadim Rozenbaum, the commercial director of a large motor transport cooperative. However, the market forms a specific notion of justice as an equivalent exchange and honesty in dealing with others, as Erich Fromm wrote. Entrepreneurs have to be on the market for a long time and "therefore it is impossible always to work dishonestly". According to Gleb Abushakhmin, a lawyer for economic affairs, the new economy "does not accept swindlers". Contracts of a new type – "treaties of confidence" – appear in the new economy, Konstantin Borovoi, a prominent Russian businessmen, says. That is why entrepreneurs "need a good name". The new economy, Borovoi asserts, "resembles very much a living, self-regulating organism and the natural laws which begin to operate in it kick dishonest entrepreneurs out of business."

In other words, the mechanism of social control is strengthened by market one. Perhaps the idea of an equivalent exchange is worse than the Ten Commandments. But it is much better than the principle of "one good turn deserves another" used by "red managers" in conditions of the bureaucratic market. ■

No longer socialism, but not yet capitalism...

Photo from Spiegel (Germany)

The trap,

or why capitalism can't be built in either 500 or 5,000 days

Grigory Hanin

The wrath of the masses is already turning against the new forces in power and it will turn against them increasingly as the economic and social situation worsens. Economic failures are explained either by their incompetence, or their corruption, or both.

Far from denying the oversights made by democratic forces, I would like to point out the objective reasons for the failures.

I'll quote an example to illustrate my idea. On his return from Albania last summer, my colleague, a prominent Swedish scholar, said that his impression was that of a region in chaos and that the only way out of it was to give out all the property to people free – land, shops, factories and so on. I asked him how distribution of land could be carried out. It is so different in quality and location, and the composition of families differs as to sex and age. There is no market, and, consequently, no reasonable prices. People will shoot each other trying to prove their rights. My colleague was at a loss.

This simple example illustrates the reason why privatization faces tremendous difficulties in our country (as well as in other former socialist countries.) As long as it is a question of privatization of shops, boutiques, workshops and small enterprises, the situation is more or less tolerable, but as soon as it touches upon privatization of large enterprises or buying apartments or land, it becomes extremely slow or assumes distorted forms. The population lacks money for such privatization, leaving it to be carried out by mafia and former *nomenklatura*. Once in the hands of mafia-nomenklatura structures, enterprises are often simply embezzled, which is the usual practice of these category of people. As a result, monstrous socialism is replaced with no less, and not infrequently, a still more monstrous capitalism.

All attempts to revive capitalism by means of a free distribution of property to all, including those who have not taken part in its creation, strike one as absurd. Capital is created with one's own hands and head.

Apart from the major trap in the form of state property, the past has left us a great many others. There is a bad shortage of skilled and efficient leaders and managers. We lack knowledge and skills required under the conditions of a market economy. Democratic traditions and legal culture are too poor. Many indispensable laws are absent, others are contradictory or inoperative. New traps are added to the old ones – the intensification of ethnic conflicts, disorganization of state management and disruption of economic relations. Even one of these would be enough to utterly impair economic reforms and the normal functioning of society, and when taken together they make them practically impossible.

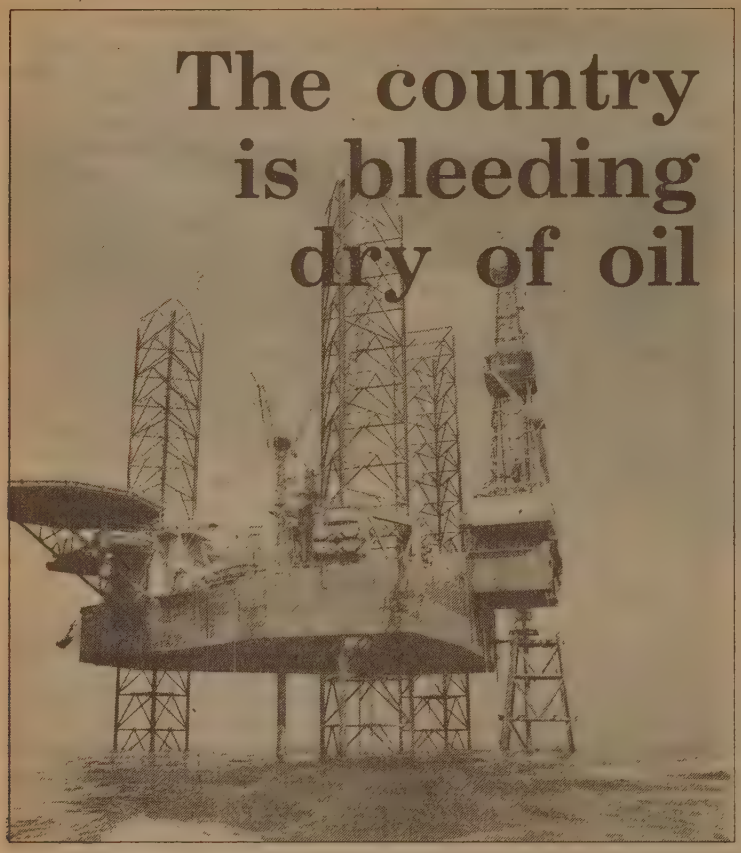
Is there anything which could give us a chance? Yes, there is – the vast territory; the numerous population which is ready to work for a small, according to world standards, pay and endure privations; an education standard much higher than in the developing countries, the extremely rich natural resources; the high potential of the military industrial complex; the willingness of the West to help us carry out economic reforms. All this leaves us with some hope of avoiding these traps provided we follow a clever strategy and tactics of implementing social reforms which must fully correspond to the peculiarities of our situation. All reforms so far suggested practically disregarded them. I will point out two decisive factors which can save the situation – foreign participation in our reforms and their gradual implementation. We have neither opportunities nor the skill to carry out these reforms on our own, therefore participation by foreigners in the life of society as investors, tradesmen, college lecturers and concessionaires is desirable, and society must do its best to facilitate it.

The foreign participation must be as large-scale as in the times of Peter the Great. A massive foreign participatiuon in, for instance, exploitation of gas, oil, coal and gold deposits, could considerably improve Russia's economic situation within a few years.

An attempt to jump into a different world in a short time is adventurism. Capitalism can't be built in neither 500 or 5,000 days. It has been built for centuries, if not for millennia. In 1988-1989 I shared the ideas of many radical economists concerning the desirability for radical and momentary transformations of the former USSR's economic system. However, subsequent considerations of the problem made me change my attitude. Gradual changes are more beneficial than impetuous jumps.

NOVOSIBIRSK

The country is bleeding dry of oil



Valery Neverov,
President, Hermes Company

The Russian government's experts believe the production of oil on the territory of the former USSR to be 460 million tons. The CIA's assessment gives the figure of 425 million. However, the Hermes analysts predict the actual drop to 410 million. If that prediction is realized, Russia will have to give up its export of oil altogether and consequently cut down on its imports, particualrly imports of food, including grain. Moreover, starting from the second half of 1991, Russia will have to search for new sources of payment for oil imports.

Backwardness: from oil prospecting to gas-filling stations

This country's energy generation and fuels integrated industry used to be the leader in terms of capital investment, to the detriment of other industries, for decades. In 1986-1989, that industry accounted for almost 40 percent of all the capital investments in this country's industries. This share mustn't be increased if we want to be able to produce anything apart from the fuels. It would seem that the lion's share of overall investment should ensure this industry far more efficient production resources, compared against the resources of the consumer-goods industries from the so-called "B" bracket. In fact, the situation of the industry in question, or at any rate, of its oil branch, is as bad as that of light industry.

In the last decade, this country survived mostly thanks to its oil export. This year, Russia will probably start importing oil...

In 1986-1990, the oil and gas industry received capital investment to the tune of 72.2 billion rubles (in current prices). The bulk of the investment was used to increase the main productive assets of the monopolist producer of oil, the Ministry of Oil and Gas Industry. Eventually, its productive assets accrued to the level of 120 billion rubles. But the equipment in question was obsolete – in comparison with the world standard – already when it was produced. The technological backwardness of the equipment could be measured in decades, rather than years. Often, the capital was invested in production of installations designed back in the 1950s. One in every three well-reconditioning units in current use here is of the type phased out of production five to seven years ago. They ceased to be advanced models long before that. In the meantime, the captains of the industry have been asking for ever more capital investments. But the plans for designing new equipment remain unfulfilled not because of a lack of investment in research. From 640 new models of equipment and instruments (planned to be designed in the latest five-year plan period) 140 haven't been developed yet. And the 500 which have been developed are surely years behind the world's latest achievements.

Almost all the oil extracted here goes to local refineries. In 1990, the country extracted 552 million tons of oil and refined 455.6 million tons (practically all the rest was exported). The degree of refining was unsatisfactorily low: according to official reports, it was merely 63 percent in 1990. The absence of economically motivated ties between the extraction and processing of oil is glaring and manifests itself in the work of commercial structures involved: in November 1991, crude oil went for a higher average price than gasoline, at the Moscow Commodity Exchange!

All sequential technological stages – from oil prospecting to, figuratively speaking, gas-filling station – are in an equally (or even more) deplorable situation than the oil extraction. For example, 70 percent of the equipment currently used by the oil-refining industry is obsolete.

The cream has been skimmed off

Scientists have long ago developed optimal modes of exploitation of the oil-bearing seams, ensuring fairly high output. However, the currently employed technology here ensures an output merely at the rate of 35 percent. An excellent example are the oil fields of Western Siberia. Under an intensive extraction mode, the corresponding rate

goes down to 27-28 percent. The state always wanted its oil readily available and therefore made the oilers step up the extraction. Sometimes oil fields were given up as exhausted merely after extraction of 9-10 percent of oil potentially deposited in its oil-bearing seams.

Under the superintensive exploitation of the Samotlor oil fields, the maximal output (130 million tons a year) was reached quickly, and equally quick was the ensuing slump in extraction. As a result, huge oil reserves are irretrievably lost.

The cream was skimmed off quickly, and the early 1980s marked the start of a precipitous plunge in the rate of oil extraction.

There is no adequate replacement for the potentially highly-productive oil fields which have been used up in a matter of few years, partly as a result of inefficiency in geological prospecting. No new large natural deposits of oil were discovered in Western Siberia in latest years. Therefore a large number of small oil fields had to be tapped. By January 1986, 856 oil fields were under development around this country, and by January 1990, 1,099. Today the oil extraction rate is dropping at four of every five oil fields. The rate of drilling prospecting holes was 20 percent down in 1989-1991, resulting in the reduction of accrual of the discovered natural reserves of oil by 27 percent alone. Half of the discovered reserves are in 46 natural deposits, 30 of which are in Tyumen.

The style of oil extraction practiced in this country can be compared with the ways of a hunter who kills big game for the sake of a little of the best parts, leaving the huge rest of the carcass behind. Such wasteful practices are also applied to casing-head gas, 12 billion cu m of which got burned away annually, as well as to the oil proper the degree of extraction from the seams which remains shamefully low, and to the natural environment itself – stretches of tundra, taiga, and steppe are getting fouled up by oil spilled around due to the unsophisticated technologies used. The country has 52 R&D and design institutes employing several thousand Full and Candidate Doctors of Sciences, but the actual technologies used in oil extraction are hopelessly lagging behind the world's standards.

In terms of living standards, this country's oilers are lagging behind not only their colleagues abroad but also the majority of the nations

The world's cheapest oil

In 1986-1990, the state maintained the oil price at practically the same level: between 24.89 rubles and 25.70 rubles. That low price was presumed to result from low average oil extraction cost: 14.88 rubles in 1986, and 21.92 rubles in 1990. In 1991, the price was hiked to about 70 rubles.

But can the country really profit from quoting that low price for its oil? Why is a ton of oil similar to Soviet oil fetches $150 in the world market and 2,000-2,500 rubles in the Commodity Exchanges in this country (and is bought at that price not only for the purpose of speculation)? The exceptionally low cost of Soviet oil is explained by an unhusbandly approach to the exploitation of oil fields here. Millions of acres of oil-contaminated land didn't have a "price tag," which also determined the low cost of oil.

The new Russian government introduced huge payment rates for the use of land under oil rigs, but did it rather clumsily: on a fine October day in 1991, the oilers learned that they were expected to remit several million rubles to the state for the use of the land, before the year was out. At the same time, the state oil price remained as low as ever. At the same time, the market price for oil almost reached 3,000 rubles a ton, while the state experts and specialists from the former USSR Ministry of Oil and Gas Industry suggested to price a ton of oil at 240-450 rubles.

The oilers are still supposed to sell almost all the oil they extract at the superlow government prices, and almost the entire profits from the sale of a small part of the oil on the free market are being snatched from them into either the "industry-stabilization" fund or the "region-stabilization" fund.

New Russian roulette

Other countries are very considerate and sparing about their non-reproducible resources, including oil. It is enough to point out that the world (apart from the USSR) hasn't whatsoever increased its oil production in the last decade. The majority of oil wells, especially in the USA, remain stopped.

The former rulers of this country concealed from their nation the fact that the export of oil from the USSR reached an enormous amount of 170 million tons a year or even more, all of it dumped for 25-30 rubles a ton (for the COMECON) and 70-80 rubles worth of hard currency (for the West).

Giant oil exports lasted until 1990: 125.9m tons in 1988, 115 m tons in 1989, and 99.25m tons in 1990. The prices remained very low all the time. Western speculators reselling Soviet crude oil and petroleum products at a huge profit dubbed their operation "new Russian roulette."

In 1991, the state licensed export of 150m tons of oil (against the initial plan of 61m tons). How could this happen? Who actually is responsible for issuing those licenses? The size of presumable bribes involved is mind-boggling, considering that to purchase one ton of oil for 1,000-2,000 rubles and to resale it for $120-$150 brings an enormous profit.

An unexpected recall of all the previously issued licences hit primarily the oilers, who found their monthly export quotas cut by 90 percent by the close of the year, rather than the speculators (who surely found a way to extricate themselves from the precarious situation).

The ban on oil deliveries from Russia which was imposed last November and dictated by understandable motives evidently ignored relations existing in the oil industry. Though these relations were built not on the basis of the market economy, the rupture of those didn't bring forth a new system of relations. Nothing of worth was offered as a replacement of the former ties. Was it an act of fighting against the plundering of national wealth? But why then did ever more companies take up trade in oil and development of oil fields which virtually are now the property of foreigners and people closely linked with the top officialdom? The following pattern shows up here: in the beginning, the country's oil industry was infiltrated by small-scale and medium companies, and now it is infested by big companies. The country's best natural oil deposits are being leased on a long-term basis to foreign concessioners for a song, with the excuse that the deposits are as good as lost all the same.

Who robbed the oilers?

We have extracted 41 percent of all the oil in the bowels of the earth in this country. This rate for Western Siberia is 26.8 percent. It was the easiest oil to extract at minimal cost. Now, the mean rate of yield of the wells is steadily going down. There is little oil left in the chief deposits.

In the old oil-producing regions, the mean ratio of drained deposits can be as high as 75 percent. The rate of depletion, due to extraction, of the oil deposits in Russia is 3-5 times higher than in Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Venezuela, or Kuwait.

As much as 77 percent of the overall oil reserves discovered in Tyumen (which accounts for two thirds of the entire oil extracted in this country) have been tapped and drawn from. In 1980, more oil was extracted in the Tyumen Region than in any single country of the world. Incidentally, this country is second only to Saudi Arabia in terms of discovered oil reserves. We continue to pump oil from the earth, ignoring the loss incurred. This country could certainly do with strict legal regulations concerning extraction of oil from seams. The state must concern itself with the strategy and introduction of legally binding conditions of extraction of oil, rather than petty patronage. Otherwise the main function – which can be fulfilled by none but the state bodies – will be overlooked and neglected. The actual routine work will be best of all carried out by economic managers, especially if they successfully evolve into regular business entrepreneurs.

Why are the living standards of Tyumen oilers inferior to those of their colleagues abroad and even those of the majority of their compatriots, though oil-producing regions can boast the highest living standards everywhere else in the world? In this country, only 81.4 percent of oilers' families have adequate housing, while the relevant figure for the Tyumen Region is even less: 69 percent. People are often living in trailers here. The average wage in that industry in 1991 was only 454 rubles a month, though 51,000 oilers are manning their rigs on the basis of weeks-long shifts.

Who misappropriates the gains exacted through the labour effort of oilers and how? What were dozens of billions of rubles earmarked for development of the oil industry actually spent for? What was the purpose of the oilers' toil out in the biting cold of 40 degrees Centigrade? The oil of Tyumen brought the regime another one and a half decades of life. At first, the regime depredated and squandered the wealth accrued – in grinding toil – by the preceding generations, then it started to plunder reserves which ought to be preserved for the generations to come who are thus robbed of oil and other riches. The future generations have as much right to this country's national wealth as the current generations, and it is impermissible to ignore the interests of the latter. In the so-called "stagnation period" (and later), the rate of oil export from this country was limited only by the handling capacity of pipelines and sea ports. The actual price of that policy was: dropping of alternatives which will never be recurred in the future, because of the critical depletion of oil deposits, irretrievable contamination of land, and also debilitation of the health of hundreds of thousands and even millions of people.

Privatization

We have no time to build up resolution for action. If we continue to abstain from drilling new holes, we won't be able to extract any oil at all after five yeas, if the current downward tendency persists. In 1990, we had to commit to operation 166 new wells (which is 2.3 times as many as in 1980) in order to make up for the loss of used up oil-yielding capacities to the tune of one million tons. Now, compensation of the comparable loss will require sinking 240-250 new and deeper wells (the average well depth was 2,003 metres in 1980 and 2,340 metres in 1990). It is aqueous oil emulsion rather than pure oil that is pumped from the wells now. Separation of water from oil is an increasingly costly affair, equal to the oil extraction in general.

This country's oil industry is experiencing a deep crisis the extent of which, perhaps, is not fully realized by the government which has recently adopted several virtually counterproductive decisions. For the sake of reaching momentary goals, the initiative of Russian entrepreneurs gets hamstrung, while foreign companies are offered an opportunity for quick gains.

Everywhere in the world, licences for development of natural deposits are openly sold through auction. But in this country, the Supreme Soviet still hasn't opened discussion of the draft legislation on mineral resources exploitation, which is supposed to provide the sole legal basis for foreign involvement in that sphere of the economy. All the current changes in the proprietorial rights in the oil industry are aimed to suit the interests of a rather narrow circle.

People have grown used to believe that oil production and processing must remain a state monopoly and should be carried out on state enterprises only. However, a more rational approach to the issue (like turning the state concerns into possesion of shareholders companies) can earn the state huge revenue (about 200,000,000 rubles in a matter of 6-8 weeks) and ensure normal further development of the industry. For all that, the state will have the largest shareholding. True, extraction of oil is an investment-intensive industry. The question is: who is going to finance it and how? Profuse investment from the state budget has proved to be unable to bring about a change for the better. Moreover, further state investment is not only ineffective but also impossible now. According to government experts, the oil industry financing deficit for 1992 will be 30 billion rubles. Therefore the industry has to be denationalized and demonopolized.

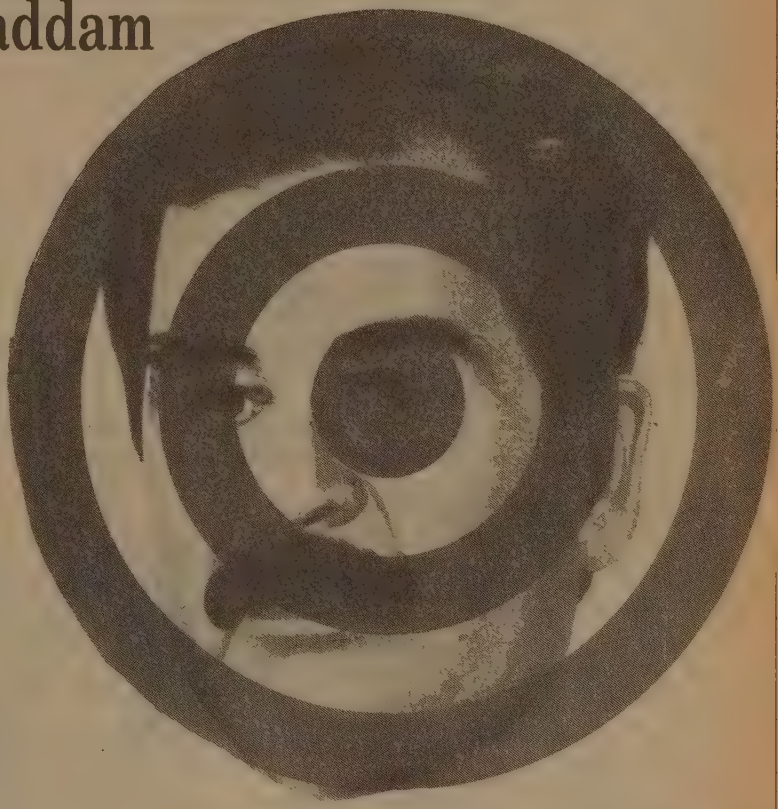
No other oil industry in the world receives state donations. Oilers know how to earn their living and also sizably replenish the public coffers through taxes they pay.

We have a chance to avert a national catastrophe, but the chance is getting ever slimmer with every passing day. Therefore we propose to without delay embark on open discussion of the issue of the restructure of production relations in the oil industry and promptly launch the implementation of a corresponding programme.

TYUMEN–MOSCOW

How long can Saddam hold on?

Yakov Borovoi and Alexander Chudodeyev



We have performed our mission, but I am disappointed, Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf said last April returning home from Saudi Arabia after the operation Desert Storm had been completed. The "assaulting Norman," 56-year-old veteran of the Vietnam war, thought it was premature to end the war against Iraq, and proposed continuing it till the complete surrender of the "Baghdad thief." President Bush was of a different opinion, and the "American hero" was soon dismissed with honours.

Be as it may

During the euphoria created by an "easy victory" in the Gulf the White House believed that the Saddam regime was on the point of collapsing without any effort by the multinational forces. By the CIA's reckoning, the Iraqi ruler was to be brought down by a military coup within several months. Washington pinned its hopes on the Iraqi Army and its logic was simple. Saddam would be unable to restore the wrecked economy. He had no money to gratify the appetites of the military. The UN sanctions would not enable him to spend petro-dollars at his own discretion. And then the long-awaited moment would come. The Army itself, without outside assistance, would settle a score with the enfeebled tyrant. In short, let Iraqis themselves pull chestnuts out of the fire. In the opinion of US leaders, the 79 Americans killed in the Gulf war were a sufficient sacrifice for the cause of freedom.

However, several months passed, and there was no coup by army officers. Washington then set its hopes on the opposition in emigration. In the motley camp of the opposition two groups played a key role in this respect. One group, based in Britain, was led by Saleh Omar al-Tikriti, former Iraqi delegate to the United Nations. The other group was led by Gen. Hasan al-Nakib, former chief of staff of the Iraqi Army, who was in emigration in Syria.

A year has passed since the operation Desert Storm began. Yet Hussein still holds the reins of government in Baghdad

The Iraqi National Concord led by al-Tikriti was hastily formed in January 1991. The leader, tied by clan bonds with Hussein (both of them came from Tikrit, a small town north of Baghdad), put his hopes on a palace coup. Incidentally, before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, members of this group tried to kill Saddam during the annual May Day review in Baghdad. However, the dictator's secret police discovered the plot and many of those involved in it were butchered.

Nevertheless, the US administration again set its hopes on al-Tikriti. An operation for deposing Saddam was drawn up with his aid. The National Concord leader was able to persuade Washington that in the event of an allied victory over Hussein six high-ranking generals from the dictator's close entourage would immediately move their troops to Baghdad. Desert Storm was over, but the anonymous generals did not turn up. It became evident that the London-based "dreamers" did not have

any serious plan of seizing power from the very outset.

At the same time the al-Nakib group offered the allies a no less ambitious plan of dislodging Hussein. They banked on the insurgent army mustered from among deserters and POWs in the territory of Saudi Arabia. The Saudis replied "inshallah" which means "if Allah wishes so." In diplomatic parlance it means "neither yes nor no."

Months passed, but camps were not put up in the desert. And they could not be put up, because al-Nakib's energetic activity was intended for the gullible. The raising of a 20,000-strong Iraqi corps on the Saudi-Iraqi border, well armed by Washington and Riyadh would be a mortal danger for the Saudi regime. In short, the US secret services again had a harebrained plan.

In the meantime, two mass rebellions broke out in Iraq – of Shiites in the south and of Kurds in the north, without Washington's blessing. President Bush and King Fahd were seriously worried. It seemed to them that Iraq was falling apart. Such a trend of events did not suite the plans of the allies. They feared that the united totalitarian state would turn into a new Lebanon where Moslem fundamentalists backed by Iran would play the main part. The emergence of an independent Kurdistan would seriously threaten the stability of NATO's southern flank and could overshadow the relations with "staunch friends" in Ankara.

Washington resolved the delicate problem in a simple way – be as it may. The rebels were given massive verbal support. However, it did not lead to arms deliveries or assistance in coordinating anti-Saddam actions. In fact, it was also a bluff, but on the part of Americans. The allies cynically thought that the weakened dictatorship of nationalist Saddam was better than one more strong regime with the green flag of Islam and portraits of Khomeini at every corner.

It remained for the West to count only on UN economic sanctions against Baghdad. However, Saddam managed to find loopholes in them. First of all, some countries, especially "fraternal" Arab states, did not fulfil the UN resolutions. Vitally necessary goods for the population were secretly delivered to Iraq through Jordan while Iraqi oil was shipped to Jordanian ports and abroad in violation of the UN sanctions.

The "secret Hussein fund" was brought into action too. It was set up on behalf of the ruling Baath Party back in 1972 and was built of five percent deducations from oil sales. The fund is estimated at 33 billion dollars. For almost 20 years it was frozen, and now it helps to stabilize the internal situation. The Iraqi leader was able to rally the social establishment (Sunnites who are dominant in the Army, the Baath Party and secret services) by emphasizing that their destiny is indissolubly linked with his own.

"Knight of the Arab nation"

Saddam Hussein, 54, did not know his father. He died before the birth of his son. Saddam was brought up by his uncle, a former army officer, who instilled in him Arab nationalism. In 1957 Hussein joined the Baath Party, then working underground. The personal qualities of a future dictator – mercilessness and composure – enabled him to join a special team formed to assassinate Gen. Kassem, then Iraqi leader.

Two years later the members of the team rained mortal machine-gun fire on the general's motorcade. During the operation Saddam was wounded in his leg, but he was able to run away from the spot. Later the courage displayed by Saddam during the bullet extraction and a difficult travel across the desert on the way to Syria was described with admiration in numerous Iraqi books and films.

The period up to the seizure of power by the Baath Party in 1968 was spent by a future "knight of the Arab nation" either in prison or underground. One of the authors of a book devoted to Saddam's activity writes: "The life as a conspirator and terrorist greatly influenced the shaping of Saddam Hussein's outlook and mentality. His reticence, discretion and mistrust towards aliens are rooted in those years when he was hunted for and himself wove numerous plots with evident talent."

At last, one of the plots ended in success and Hussein came to power. He "celebrated" his victory by liquidating 50 high civilian and military officials, his former comrades-in-arms. Then followed other numerous "purges." Saddam himself managed to survive at least several attempts on his life.

Kurds: the forgotten people?

Photo from Paris-Match (France)

Every

I drove up to the border Iraqi Kurdistan at tw o'clock after noon. It was rai ing. A good omen? It seeme to me that I was watching a fi in Moscow, which has becon my native home after ma years of exile. But it was a rea ity and I was the main charact in it. I saw the border, mou tains, guerrillas, people in n tional attires and heard my n tive Kurdish speech after ma years of nostalgia for it.

As I looked around I sa burnt trees, ruined houses, d stroyed tanks, and hungry ch dren in cold tents. The refuge fled to the border to escape th brutalities of the Sadda troops. They are unable to r turn home because their o rich land is still occupied.

The chauffeur told me hc his family was arrested. The only guilt was their Kurdish n tionality. The members of th family were thrown into prisc and brutally tortured. "We ha

One of Saddam's basic qualities is his ability to close the ranks of his associates at a time of grave threat. Shortly after the defeat in the Gulf war – though in Baghdad it is described as "a victorious repulsing of the 30-nation aggression" achieved thanks to "the staunchness of the Islamic nation in the face of the American-NATO-Zionist aggressive conspiracy" – Saddam formed a government consisting mainly of his close relatives and fellow-townsmen. They have a common destiny and nowhere to retreat. For instance, one of the Saddam's closest associates, Ali Hasan al-Majid, 48, a cousin of Hussein, conducted the scorched earth policy in Kurdistan and issued an order for the chemical bombing of the Halabja village there. He also established an Iraqi "order" in occupied Kuwait. With such a reputation he can hardly betray his patron.

The peace of the Baghdad elite, who are not hard-up for anything in spite of UN sanctions, is guarded by a powerful repressive machinery: four security and as many intelligence services. In short, it is not so easy to hurl such a regime down, the more so by bluff.

Iraq and the presidential race

The Hussein regime annoys the Bush administration. What to do with that tyrant? The presidential election is in the offing. According to opinion polls, 67 percent of Americans demand the removal of Saddam from power and are looking for more energetic actions on the part of Washington. Moreover, George Bush can score additional points in the presidential race by dethroning the Iraqi strongman. Besides, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states, which cannot feel secure as long as revenge-seeking Hussein rules in Baghdad, urge the US President to fulfil his promise to finish off the dictator.

So the White House had to do something, and it gave the CIA the go-ahead for conducting hush-hush operations in Iraq. A total of 30 million dollars was allocated for this purpose. Anti-Saddam propaganda is now beamed at Iraq from Saudi Arabia. Ironically, the CIA director Robert Gates once supplied Iraq with intelligence data about the combat potential of Iran, the "eternal enemy" of Baghdad. Some time ago he flew into the Middle East to coordinate a plot against Saddam Hussein.

There is again much ado about Iraq. It is rumoured that even an armed intervention might be organized against the Saddam regime to thwart the Iraqi programme of creating an Islamic nuclear bomb. Nevertheless, the impression is that the actions now being taken are not an essentially new course but merely a continuation of the old policy designed to overthrow Saddam.

If the same totalitarian regime remains in Baghdad, even without Saddam, it is difficult to expect peace and tranquility in the Middle East. Another operation Desert Storm is likely to be undertaken then. ■

stone is good in its place

liberated many towns and villages of Kurdistan," the chauffeur, a grey-haired man, went on. "We had thousands of Iraqi soldiers who did not want to fight against us. Our women and children shared their bread with them. And do you know how precious a piece of bread was at the time? We also had hours of joy, but George Bush (we respectfully called him haji Bush then) did not honour his promise, though he urged us to fight against Saddam. If America began the struggle for the overthrow of the Baghdad thief we would support it. But Bush turned his back on us. The entire world again turned its back on our troubles. We have got accustomed to this. Thank Allah, Bush and his allies sent their troops to Kurdistan, when Saddam launched a campaign of genocide against the Kurds. We shall never forget this aid."

During the conversation I heard the hum of planes. "Our allies are flying," the chauffeur said. This is how the Kurds respectfully call the troops of Western states which came to their aid. "The sky is the only hope for us," he added seriously, and I understood that he had in mind not only Allah.

In the small town of Diana, renamed Sadyq on the orders of Baghdad authorities, I changed to a bus. The driver of the bus turned on Kurdish music. I could not tear my eyes away from the landscape. My past life rushed into my memory.

Today there are no Iraqi officials in this district. For the first time I travelled as a free man along the free territory of Kurdistan.

I made a new change at the Arbil railway station. Now I took a taxi, and we drove around the town for a long time. The taxi driver looked at me intently: "You seem to have lived in a foreign land for a long time and forgot your native town." He drove me up to my house and refused to take money.

And so I stood before the door of my house. My heart sank. I rang, but nobody went out. I rang again, and my father opened the door: "Whom do you want?" He did not recognize me. I could only pronounce the word "papa." For the first time I saw my father in tears. Then followed embraces, tears, my mother fainted away.

We talked and could not stop talking. We lived separately for many years. They suffered because they did not see me, and nevertheless they did not want me to return to Iraq. I would have been arrested here in the least. The Saddam regime did not forgive those who emigrated from the country and actively conducted anti-Saddam propaganda in a foreign land. During all these years I suffered from a disease for which there are no drugs. It was nostalgia. However, in my heart I was always in my land.

I slept well for several nights. And I could not sleep badly in my own home under the blanket with which my mother covered me. During all these ten years she did not allow anyone to take my blanket. Then we had relatives and acquaintances coming to see us. Many of those whom I wanted to see were no longer alive. I did not recognize some people, because they were children when I went away.

The return to my home, even for a short time, is the happiest moment in my life. Crossing the threshold of my house, I began to think sadly about a new parting, and this moment came. I felt as if someone was stripping off my skin. I still hear the constrained weeping of my mother and the cries of my sister: "Don't go away. Don't leave us again."

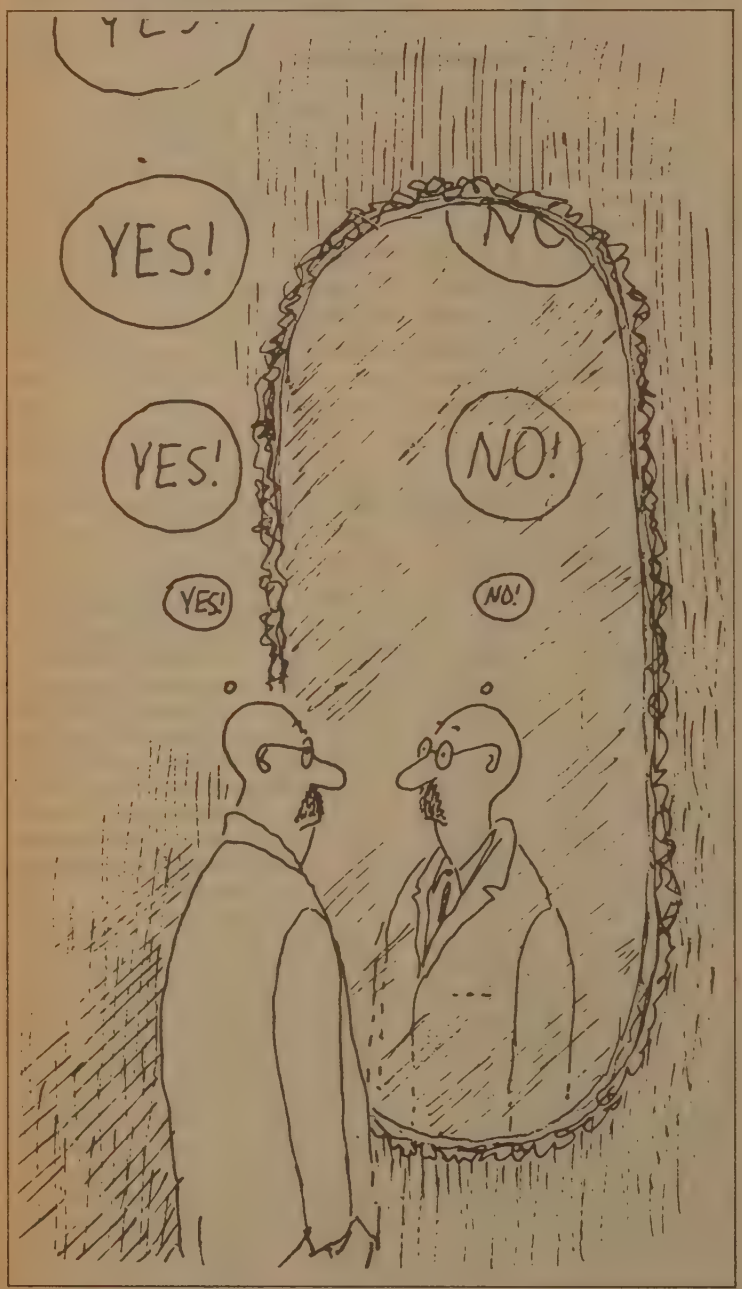
There is a saying in Kurdistan, "every stone is good in its place."

I will return home.

Muafak Dargalai

Common market: the priority task

The European integration has been perfected for decades. The CIS leaders want to accomplish it overnight



Drawing by Victor Bogorad

Yuri Davydov

This event has already gone down in history – on the night of December 10 last year, in the 34th year of existence of the European Economic Community, the European Council which gathered in the city of Maastricht in Netherlands decided to complement it with a political (including security problems) and monetary-economical union. On February 7 an official agreement was signed there. This step demonstrated once again that, having allowed a free circulation of ideas and commodities across their borders, the twelve EC member states had created a successfully functioning open system capable of both self-regulation and autonomous development. Thanks to the success achieved by the Community, the idea of national sovereignty which consolidated the state and administrative complexes in Europe and partitioned it off with borders in the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries, is becoming a thing of the past. Its place is taken by the thinking in inter- and supranational categories reflecting the contemporary character of relationships between peoples.

The meaning of the profound changes which the integrated Europe has accomplished during the recent years consists precisely in this transition from a narrow national approach to the supranational common European and, at times, even universal human one. The present transition from the Common Market to a united one, from regulated tariffs to a common economic, monetary, social and foreign policy, to a unitary currency unit, common European citizenship and, eventually, European self-awareness, makes the process of European integration irreversible. The old abbreviation, EC, acquires a new meaning, that of a European union, with a dozen of claimants impatiently knocking at its entrance, including the Baltic republics, Slovenia and Croatia. There is no one to doubt now that the European Community is the kernel of a future united Europe.

Russia's joining the EC in the near future is ruled out altogether because it is too big and comprises too many ethnic groups and is too overburdened with problems and nuclear weapons in order to become an equal partner of Denmark or Luxemburg. Nevertheless, the fate of democracy and reforms in Russia is largely predetermined by the intensity of its interaction with Europe and by how close their cooperation is going to be.

Three days before the meeting in Maastricht, in the opposite corner of the continent, the political existence of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics reached its end after a short discussion by the presidents of Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine. It was supplanted by the Commonwealth of Independent States (the title implying neither geographic nor any other specific identifications –

as if a commonwealth of dependencies were possible.) On December 21, 1991, in the city of Alma-Ata 11 former Soviet republics declared themselves its founders. It becomes more and more obvious, however, that, while the disintegration of the Union is an accomplished fact, the creation of the CIS has posed a lot of questions to which there are no definite answers. So far its members are not unanimous about the purpose of its creation. The Ukrainian leadership sees its task in providing a legal basis for the dissolution of the USSR and division of its property. Other national leaders believe that the meaning of the existence of the CIS is to allay the destructive consequences of the Union's disintegration, try to preserve the life-securing system of its former constituent parts by securing stability in the transitional period, and check the disintegration of the armed forces, primarily of its strategic (nuclear) component.

However, the tasks of the Commonwealth are hardly confined to rescuing functions alone. However weak its internal relationships might be, the Commonwealth is only the first, initial stage of integration. The viability of the CIS will be determined by the strength of the internal impulses directed at the preservation and consolidation of its unity and by its readiness for integration and development.

The process of integration bears its fruit only in the case of states entering into a union voluntarily, being prepared to follow the decisions agreed upon even if they in some respects run contrary to their national interests. This is shown by the far from smooth history of the European Community, the ASEAN and other communities. The appearance in the territory of the former Soviet Union of first a Eurasian common market, followed by a commonwealth and more closely integrated structures, is expedient both economically and politically (including security problems). It is so economically because integration based on a liberal and capacious market would preclude a one-sided development of former Soviet republics and provide for a greater freedom of manoeuvre with regard to their natural resources, stimulating the joining of their spheres of production and services in the scientific and technical revolution. Politically, such an integration would limit possibilities of conflicts which have accumulated during the recent years, having promoted the solution of ethnic minority problems and the problem of human rights in general. It would remove the problem of national borders and disputed territories because this problem loses its significance in the situation of a free circulation of commodities, capital and people; it would fill the vacuum which formed in international relations after one of the superpowers had ceased to exist. Lastly, it would provide the CIS states with a prospect of becoming, in the future, part of a common economic space – from San Francisco via Europe to Tokyo.

Are these prospects real? Have Russia and its partners a chance to reach Maastricht? Much will be determined by the transitional period and the decisions made now whose implementation is scheduled for years and decades to come. Therefore, for these plans to be successful, a will for renovation is required, as well as wisdom of politicans who are able to learn not only from their own mistakes, but also from the experience of those who have already completed the path we are only going to embark on. We will have to realize that there are a lot of problems which can be solved not so much by intellectual insight and concentrated will as by time.

> A half-a-century delay in society's development can be overcome in ten years, but not in a month or a year – society will either lag behind the changes or won't withstand the overstrain

Certainly, integration within the framework of the CIS will be inevitably different from the classical examples offered by the EC, because of differences in the starting conditions – we have neither national markets nor a political culture, but instead we have in excess national conflicts and the psychology of social dependence. However, certain common laws still exist, and their disregard already causes tension in the Commonwealth and it can challenge its very existence in the future.

It took one year to work out the Treaty of Rome of 1957 which was the starting point of the European Economic Community; lawyers and economists of repute from six countries took part in it. The agreement consisted of 248 articles which outlined the regime of partnership, the procedure of decision making, executive structures, the mechanisms of conflict settlement, the order of adopting amendments to the agreement, and delimited the competence of the Community and the sovereign states. It was actually the EEC Constitution which lay down the norms and the regime of its functioning, proceeding from which, the partners act and settle their problems.

The CIS has nothing like a constitution of that kind. The haste with which it was created affected negatively, primarily, its legal foundation. The seven clauses of the Declaration which reflect the intentions of the sides in the most general way will hardly serve as a normative basis for mutual relations or promote integration of the Commonwealth member states. The weak professional elaboration of the basic documents, a lack of conceptual approaches, the possibility for different interpretations of the same categories can result in situations which grow into conflicts. If, for instance, the text of an agreement on strategic forces contains no definition of the latter, it is of no importance as a legal document, which we are witnessing now. Of course, the cause of the dispute over the Black See Fleet is more profound than that, but the negligence in drawing up this document which determines the norms of relations between the CIS partners has contributed to the conflict between them.

The relations between the EC partners were also far from ideal, because national egoism was the main obstacle imparing their integration as well. Yet these unpleasant manifestations were regarded in the EC as acceptable concomitant side-effects of growth, democracy and as an integral part of the political process. A normal reaction to them did not lead to self-destruction, but to self-perfection, to the appearance of immunity which, without removing discords, was nevertheless capable of making the system resistant to them. This was precisely the natural way in which the general potential for conflicts in the EC was reduced.

Also important is the fact that its founders did not drag anyone into the EC by force. When the Treaty of Rome was being prepared Great Britain was invited to participate in the process of integration. However, its government, possessed with an idea of sovereignty, refused to do so. Four years later London filed an application for entering the EC, but only 12 years later it was admitted. In the CIS, Ukraine is seemingly claiming for the role of Great Britain. Perhaps, the experience gained in Europe has to be used here too, by forming, within the Commonwealth, at first a narrow group of states gravitating to the integration. What is needed is patience, time and an evidence of the fact that unification brings fruit. This being so, it will be hard for Ukraine, too, to stay outside of the Commonwealth. And Russia's present relations with this state can only alienate the CIS's other member states from it.

The acquisition of an anti-crisis immune system is a question of life and death for the CIS shaken by ethnic controversies on all levels. However, the evolutionary approach aimed at a natural growth of political culture is not popular in our society which is in the epicentre of revolutionary storms. Extraordinary measures, personal diplomacy and solemn promises to live in friendship henceforth are preferred. When the control over the observance of the agreements reached is entrusted to the army of bureaucracy, i.e. the forces which are the least capable of compromising, conflict situations can grow into military confrontation, as evidenced not only by Yugoslavia, but also by the Transcaucasia.

Military unions are consolidated by a common external threat. They disintegrate when the danger decreases or when it turns out that it was a fictitious one. Such was the fate of the Warsaw Treaty Organization. Unlike military unions, economic integration is necessitated by the internal needs of a state at a certain stage of its development. Integration perfects society's life-securing systems and hightens its well-being by means of intensified competition. This is, perhaps, why economic integration is of primary importance and has priority over other aspects of the integration process – political, military, social and legal ones. The emergence of a single economic complex creates in time a natural need for political, military, legal and other superstructures, while attempts to turn the pyramid upside down – to change the natural path of integration – have usually ended in failure.

The West European integration began with the creation of the coal and steel association in 1951. Along with this, under the conditions of the Cold War, attempts were made to speed up the region's military and political integration. On May 27, 1952, representatives of six European countries who met in Paris agreed on the creating of the European Defence Community. Discussed parallel to it was the question of creating a European political community, and in March of 1953 the text of the corresponding agreement was already drawn up. However, both projects were blocked in spite of the growing external threat – West Europeans preferred economic integration to military and political one. On March 25, 1957, the agreement about the creation of the European Economic Community (the Common Market) was signed.

In the meantime, the CIS is being created proceeding from political interests, attempts are made to carry out military integration and formation of a Soviet NATO is discussed (what it means in the situation of disintegration has been demostrated by Yugoslavia). The February 14, 1992, Minsk summit of the CIS focussed on military issues too. No integration in this sphere was reached; the sharing out of the armed forces of the former USSR took place, a process which only enhanced disagreement between the partners. There was no time left for discussing economic problems on whose solution further consolidation of the CIS depends. In this connection President Nazarbayev's bitter remark, "Commonwealth as it has been contemplated does not exist yet," is quite understandable.

For all that, the problems of economic interdependence are so pivotal that, unless approaches to their solution are found, the Commonwealth will collapse under the pressure of national egoisms

The Agreement about the economic union is no longer valid, because it is based on the principles rejected by the founders of the CIS. At the same time their declarations, protocols and agreements do not contain any programme of economic integration apart from their willingness to synchronize the unfreezing of prices and their verbal support for the idea of a common economic space and Eurasian market.

For all that, the problems of economic interdependence are so pivotal that, unless approaches to their solution are found, the Commonwealth will collapse under the pressure of national egoisms. There is an urgent necessity to define common norms, measures and conditions regulating circulation of commodities, services, work force and capital across the internal borders of the Commonwealth, as well as common principles on which to base the creation of national markets and the common CIS market. For the time being, the most-favoured-treatment regime is introduced on the principle of bilateral agreements of Russia-Kazakhstan type.

It is also true that it is impossible to prevent the twelve independent states in the process of national identification from further dissociating. Only the deepening economic integration of the CIS countries will at a certain stage bring about the necessity for a unification of their political structures.

How, under the conditions of political pluralism, is it possible to reconcile controversial national interests and let each participant of the process of integration feel that his interests are reconed with? During 35 years this has been reached in the EC by means of the principle of concensus in decision making. Perhaps, this is not always the best method, but it is indispensable in the case of an organization representing a number of interests. Reaching a concensus presupposes common readiness to compromise. This readiness is sufficiently strong in democratic societies and weak in post-communist society. Unfortunately, post-communist leaders, more often than not, regard as more important not a jointly achieved result, but a personal (national) victory, which alienates instead of uniting. On the other hand, searches for a solution through a consensus teaches one to respect others and not only one's own dear person, to reckon with others' opinion and recognize their right to truth too. The starting point of a commonwealth is precisely this, and not at all the attempts to divide the legacy.

But let us return to history. During the first 10 or 15 years the international activity of the EC partners was concentrated on the regulation of their relationships. A new system of group ties between countries was to be created from naught and it had to be endowed with the power of self-regulation.

A path like that is more than a necessity for the present CIS and, certainly, for Russia which found itself in an absolutely novel geopolitical situation after the disintegration of the Union. Its autochthonous population became a minority in a dozen of other states and its lines of communication with the outer world run through their territories. Its new neighbours are countries which Russia has never recognized in the past and with which it has no orderly international contacts. A double "padding" between Russia and the West, a kind of "cordon sanitaire" – formed by the East European countries and the belt of former Soviet republics, meaning now Russia has to pay for the "path to the West."

In the meantime Russia's foreign policy activities, continuing the former USSR's line, are oriented to Western Europe and the United States and Russia's President and Foreign Minister visit Western countries more frequently than the capitals of the CIS states. Of course, it is necessary to address the West's concern about our chaotic state, but, as Gorbachev's example shows, it's easier to gain popularity abroad than in one's motherland. International repute and world-wide influence are not the same thing, and the latter is attained at home. Therefore, if Russia is interested in the emergence of an integrated Commonwealth, it will have to change its foreign policy priorities; otherwise many of its present partners will turn to the other centres of power, as it has already happened in the case of Eastern Europe.

In the meantime the US Secretary of State Baker, is more active, than his Moscow counterparts, in mastering the CIS's new geopolitical space.

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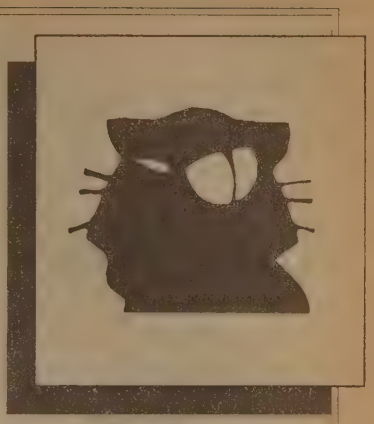

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This diagram was published in 1987, in a *NT* special supplement called SDI: Dangers, Illusions, Alternative. Today Russia is prepared to get on board with the Americans in a joint SDI programme...

How to do without the No.1 potential enemy

During his recent visit to the US, Boris Yeltsin put forward a number of new initiatives in the field of nuclear arms control. What do these initiatives mean in a changed political environment? What role will nuclear weapons have to play?

Andrei KOKOSHIN, Corresponding Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, interviewed by a *New Times* correspondent

New Times. Recently President Yeltsin has come up with the suggestion that Russia's high technologies and the United States' Strategic Defence Initiative be combined to protect the world community on a global scale. Is this a realistic proposition?

Andrei Kokoshin. American-Russian cooperation may be close and active without involving any major production expenses. I mean, first and foremost, cooperation in the use of the US's and Russia's missile attack warning systems which are the biggest and the most sophisticated ones in the world. With a joint effort, we can "shield" an enormous area – the whole of the Northern hemisphere, at least.

In itself, the warning system is not a means of defence, it just makes it possible to identify a launch, therefore the problem of protecting the United States from accidental, unsanctioned launchings and from strikes by a relatively small number of ballistic missiles is now under lively discussion in the United States. In our country, a great deal of attention is given to anti-missile defence problems as well. Although asymmetrical, the Russian and American ABM systems have much in common.

The ABM Treaty played a crucial role during the hard times of Soviet-American confrontation and, therefore, ought to be "handled with care." The President of Russia has declared that he will observe it. Considering the state its economy is in now, Russia cannot afford anything costly. At the same time, maintaining and up-grading the missile attack warning system that we have, both on our own and in cooperation with the United States, is a realistic task.

NT. The five nuclear powers can agree on cutting or even eliminating nuclear arms... Why, then, should we get involved with the wasteful Star Wars project?

A.K. They surely can agree on a nuclear arms cut, but as to the elimination of nuclear weapons, this is a moot question. Suffice it to compare

the latest proposals by President Bush and those by President Yeltsin. There are substantial differences between them. Our proposals are more radical. The Americans suggest a deeper cut than that provided for by the strategic arms reduction Treaty, but set a much higher ceiling than we do. This is not accidental. Such a stand reflects their view not only on the naval component of the strategic "triad" but also on the role of nuclear weapons in general. I hope, however, that a joint short-term solution to the problem will be found. Complete nuclear disarmament is not the order of the day yet, unfortunately, although today a radical cut in nuclear arms is more realistic than in 1985 when Gorbachev suggested it. On the whole, the efforts made in the second half of the eighties were not in vain.

NT. One may get the impression that we seek to kind of "hang onto" the SDI. The utilitarian purpose of this initiative is, obviously, to keep nuclear physicists busy somehow. And still why should the United States want to cooperate with us in this matter? We have no money, and as to brains... Doesn't America have enough brains of its own?

A.K. I can reduce this idea to more specific practical questions. I think we ought to preserve what we have and what really functions. Besides, it is necessary to develop systems which would destroy missiles in cases of unsanctioned launchings. Previously, each side was preoccupied with making the launching systems 100 percent reliable, not with guarantees against unsanctioned launchings. The launching system designers were supposed to ensure high launching efficiency to the detriment of the security of the system.

NT. What, in your opinion, is the outlook for the interrelationships among the Commonwealth's four nuclear member-states?

A.K. Problems will keep arising there, I'm afraid. Hopefully, things will never come to a confrontation. It will only be for the good of Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan, which have nuclear missiles on their territories, if these weapons are moved to Russia before the year is out.

The presence of nuclear weapons in those states attracts the attention of the world community to them. I do not think that any responsible politician will claim a full-scale possession of nuclear arms. Such a claim would put him in an extremely complicated position both in the world community and in his home country. We are already witnessing a certain marginal use of this factor as a means of exerting "political pressure."

NT. Won't it make sense to consolidate, somehow, the agreements reached in Minsk on the nuclear weapons in the CIS member-states? Each CIS state may well say now: sorry, we've changed our mind...

A.K. I think that the process of negotiations among the four CIS member-states which have nuclear weapons on their territories should be continuous, in-depth and ramified, not impulsive as it has been until now. Both Ukraine and Russia have been gravely erred in this respect, I am sure. Instead of doing serious political work, our politicians often confine themselves to emotional statements. Because of our economic difficulties, our public cares about nuclear problems much less than the Western public does, for the most part. As a result the progress towards the solution of the nuclear weapons problem has slowed down somewhat.

Following the collapse of the bipolar structure of confrontation and the break-up of the USSR, nuclear weapons have come to play a different role. Not all of us are aware of that yet. Nuclear weapons are becoming an object of political bargaining not even with the potential enemy, but with friends and allies. We observe this not only in the CIS, but in the West as well. Look at Europe: France's nuclear weapons are beginning to play a political role which hasn't been so obvious until recently. In general, I am convinced that Charles de Gaulle made France a nuclear power not for the purpose of deterring us, but in order to regain his country's great power status. It was not for nothing that he put forward an all-round defence concept. The French nuclear forces have their own targeting plan, their own combat control and early warning systems. In the eyes of France's political elite, the French nuclear deterrence forces are largely intended as a political counterbalance to the might of some other states – to Germany's economic potential, for example. And this despite the fact that France is now most friendly with Germany.

Why doesn't the Ammerican elite accept the idea of a radical nuclear arms cut? In the US, nuclear weapons are regarded as a status symbol. America clearly seeks to remain the only superpower. Nuclear weapons have largely lost their combat value, but what matters to the US is to keep its enormous lead. No illusions should be harboured; even though greatly transformed the world's centre-of-force structure remains, and nuclear weapons continue to play a substantial, if diminished, role in it.

There is much talk now, both here and in the West, about the need for the US and Russia – which are no longer enemies – to retarget their nuclear weapons on the South. On whom exactly in the South? We are now on the threshold of the epoch when the traditional, almost the principal element of the military doctrine – the determination of No.1 potential enemy – will have to go. There is no such enemy any longer, and the armed forces are just an insurance against all sorts of surprises. This situation calls for a completely different strategic logic, and approach to both military force and the defence industry – now they must be flexible.

Interviewer: **Marina Shaklina**
NEW YORK–MOSCOW

New comrades in arms?

The case for a Russian-American defense community

Fred Charles Iklé

In 1991, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics expired, and the autopsy revealed that it died of three chronic illnesses. Most visible in the last few months was its death by terminal imperialism. The world's last empire could no longer hold its independent-minded nationalities together. The second chronic illness was communism. As the world's first "socialist" state, the USSR was afflicted for over seventy years – longer than any other country – with the economic inefficiency, political stultification, and human cruelty of the communist system of government. The third cause of the USSR's demise was militarism. No other industrialized state in the world has for so long spent so much of its national wealth on armaments and military forces. Soviet militarism, in harness with communism, destroyed the Soviet economy and thus hastened the self-destruction of the Soviet Empire.

Three illnesses – three component parts

Of the Soviet Union's three mortal illnesses, militarism poses the greatest danger of being passed on to the successor states; not because Russians (and Ukrainians, etc.) are a particularly militaristic people, but because militarism has become so entrenched in society. Both figuratively and literally it is cemented into the landscape.

The American-Russian military relationship, therefore, presents the greatest challenge for statesmanship. By contrast, economic relations will have much less sway, either to hurt or to help. To help, American economic assistance can play only a small role, since conditions on both sides preclude "another Marshall Plan." To hurt, economic relations are too crushingly one-sided. We need not fear the day when "Russia-bashers" in Congress accuse Russia of flooding the American market with automobiles or computers. The main economic controversy will be about Russia's debt, while lesser trade conflicts might arise as they do with Brazil, India and other nations.

Mistakes in diplomacy could bring a new Cold War only if accompanied, or followed, by moves in the military sphere – such as Russian security guarantees or arms shipments to an aggressor nation, Russian covert military assistance to terrorists or troublemakers, hints from Moscow of nuclear blackmail, or an outright attack by Russian forces on another nation.

While the military interaction between America and Russia in the coming years is pregnant with danger, paradoxically, it also offers the most promising opportunity for building a solid structure of peaceful cooperation. The new, friendly links between Washington and Moscow are still fragile, without roots in the two governments and overly dependent on changing personnel in positions of leadership. For improved relations to become enduring, they must be anchored in institutions that are endowed with steadiness, influence and continuity. On the Russian side, only the military institutions can currently meet this requirement, while the trade and financial institutions for the post-communist market economy have yet to emerge from the vortex of change.

Proposals for joint activities and common structures between the American and the Russian military establishments do not have to sail against the wind these days. President Bush, on September 27, proposed to Moscow cooperation on storage, transportation, and destruction of nuclear warheads, and discussions on nuclear command and control arrangements. He also foreshadowed proposals for cooperation on early warning against ballistic missiles. President Gorbachev generally endorsed these ideas and mentioned specifically creating a joint system "to avert" nuclear missile attacks. Senior members of Congress have recommended a joint program for destroying nuclear, chemical and other weapons, and US assistance on converting Soviet arms plants to civilian production. Representatives from Soviet military industries have approached American government officials and business executives for joint ventures to facilitate such conversion. Representatives from the Soviet space program are exploring cooperation with the US strategic defense initiative. And so on.

Dulles' anti-nuclear plans

In the present atmosphere of good will between the two militaries there is no lack of ideas for joint projects. Lacking is a sense of direction – or, more to the point, a sense of destination. Without an agreed destination, all these joint projects will merely provide occasions for good fellowship between American and Russian military people. Without institutional links animated by a common purpose, these fraternal relations offer scant protection against a new enmity. One is reminded of those yellowed photographs from around 1910, depicting German and French, Russian and Austrian generals enjoying lavish picnics together while watching through binoculars their splendidly dressed troops executing a joint manoeuvre – the better to kill each other in the First World War.

A clear and ambitious destination should guide the United States and the new Russia in shaping their military relationship. The common goal should be to eradicate the adversarial confrontation throughout the two military establishments. This endeavour will take many years, moving

forward step by step through changes in the deployment of forces, their armaments, their exercises and training, and in each side's preparation for war. Great strides have already been made; most significantly, the dismantling of the military confrontation in the center of Europe and, recently, the reductions on both sides in nuclear forces that are kept on alert.

To describe the destination of the evolving military relationship as a "defense community" serves to evoke a useful analogy with the "economic communities" that began to link former enemies in Europe forty years ago, starting with the Coal and Steel Community launched in May 1950 to promote lasting reconciliation between France and Germany. The analogy, of course, must not be pushed too far; and like all enterprises that seek to shape international affairs, the attempt to create an American-Russian defense community might fail.

Bush and Yeltsin. Disarmament race?

Photo from Financial Times (Great Britain)

Failure, though, is more likely for a policy that would cling to the tried and old. Denied a constructive long-term goal, such a policy would lack the calendar to force a process of step-by-step improvement. America and Russia, in their security relationship, would sail ahead without a compass, bobbing and weaving between partnership and confrontation, anxiously focused on some quivering balance of armaments, forever undecided whether to live with each other as friend or foe.

The nuclear arsenals on both sides will provide the lever and the fulcrum to create a defense community. On nuclear arms, Washington and Moscow are accustomed to the idea of cooperation, and America's allies favor, or at least do not oppose, such cooperation. Prudent policy-makers will continue to be burdened with the threat to national survival that lurks behind the continuing "balance of terror." And from time to time, incidents will occur to stir up public anxiety about nuclear war.

The idea that some day, somehow, this latent threat of massive nuclear destruction should be "abolished" is neither new nor the brainchild only of pacifists and left-wingers. When the nuclear age was only nine years old and proliferation had not yet started, even a realist like John Foster Dulles could speak of "nuclear abolition" as at least a distant possibility.* Today, in a literal sense, abolition appears to have become impossible. But the political transformation in Moscow has now opened the door to other solutions – although it may not stay open for long. While the United States and Russia cannot abolish nuclear weapons, they can overcome their nuclear confrontation; and in doing so, they will go a long way toward establishing a defense community.

Too much has been made of reducing the numbers of nuclear weapons, and not enough of the need to reduce the adversarial postures of the strategic forces on both sides. Without a fundamental change in these postures, even the most drastic reductions in the number of weapons would still leave America and Russia in a potentially mortal confrontation. Senior defense officials correctly keep reminding us that Soviet missiles could destroy our nation in thirty minutes. This would still be true if the 4,900 nuclear missile warheads permitted by START were halved or even reduced tenfold.

Towards a community

To overcome this confrontation, both sides must abolish the hair-trigger launch procedures of their strategic forces and abandon their constant readiness to unleash nuclear cataclysm. Presidents Bush and Gorbachev have now (Autumn 1991 – **Ed.**) agreed to take a fraction of their missile forces off alert status, a step decidedly in the right direction. Much more can and must be done. Reductions in alert status already begun can be expanded. Both sides could implement a series of specific measures, in a coordinated fashion, that would make large-scale nuclear attack impossible – short of a clearly verifiable remobilization that would take weeks or months to carry out. The joint warning system suggested by Presidents Bush and Gorbachev would complement such measures. A welcome byproduct of reducing the readiness of strategic forces will be the added protection from civil disturbances in the former Soviet Union that might endanger deployed nuclear weapons.

Nuclear planners schooled in Cold War theories will reject as heresy a nuclear strategy that would be without its thousands of missiles, primed to retaliate instantly against

*In 1954, Dulles conveyed to President Eisenhower the thought that even if the United States could break up the Soviet control over Eastern Europe and China, "this in itself would not actually touch the heart of the problem: Soviet Atomic plenty." Secretary of State Dulles mused that the only real solution might be "nuclear abolition." John Lewis Gaddis, "The Unexpected John Foster Dulles" in *John Foster Dulles and the Diplomacy of the Cold War*, Richard H. Immerman, ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 55.

an enemy first strike. The American-Russian defense community, by bringing about a wide range of military reforms, will make the abolition of the nuclear confrontation both safe and psychologically acceptable. At the end of this road, the remaining, restructured nuclear forces of the United States and Russia will coexist side by side – much like the French and British nuclear forces – without the adversarial concern about the "stability" of mutual deterrence. Are any French generals worried whether their nuclear forces are up to the task of deterring perfidious Albion from launching a first strike against France?

In harmony with this strategic transformation, an old, contentious issue between Washington and Moscow will quietly fade away – NATO's doctrine of using nuclear weapons first to stem a conventional attack by the Warsaw Pact. As the American nuclear advantage kept shrinking, this doctrine kept losing credibility; as the Warsaw Pact collapsed, it lost its purpose; and now, as theater nuclear weapons are being withdrawn, it is losing its chosen instrument.

Instead of the vanished Cold War issue of "first use," the United States, its allies, and Russia will together have to cope with a different and growing problem of first use stemming from the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. If a "future Iraq" used poison gas or biological weapons against an international peace-keeping coalition, should the United States and Russia respond with a nuclear strike? The answer might not be easy. On the one hand, any use of weapons of mass destruction by some tyrant ought to be deterred; on the other hand, the tradition of not using nuclear weapons since 1945 is of immense value for democratic nations*.

The scope of a defense community linking America and Russia should not be confined to bilateral nuclear issues and to issues raised by the global proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The community must also serve to develop a constructive relationship between the conventional forces of both sides. To this end, continued progress in reducing military secrecy is essential, and progress here can have mutually reinforcing benefits. If the two nations no longer see each other as potential enemies, the need for military secrecy between them could nearly vanish; and if military secrecy between them is nearly eliminated, they will have removed a key source of military tension that could cause a new enmity.

A particularly inspiring purpose of the defense community, both for Americans and for the new democratic forces in Russia, is the promotion of democratic practices and traditions for civilian control of the military. These days, such an effort will find open doors in Russia. Most of the military officers now in charge there want their nation to become a modern state with stable civilian control of the armed forces, and the political authorities in Moscow today, of course, share this objective. For the sake of the Russian people, for the sake of world peace, Russia must not become a "giant Burma" – a huge country with a backward civilian economy and a brutal, highly armed military dictatorship.

*This problem has already raised its ugly head during the Gulf War. See McGeorge Bundy, "Nuclear Weapons and the Gulf," *Foreign Affairs* (Fall 1991).

To construct meaningful institutional links in the military sphere, Washington and Moscow will have to design projects that can benefit from intensive cooperation and, at the same time, are important for the security of both sides. Some of these projects may be temporary (such as the safe disposal of nuclear weapons) and will be followed by new common tasks. Other joint missions will grow in importance and be long-lasting (such as coping with the continuing proliferation of new technologies for mass destruction).

The common military projects that, collectively, will constitute the defense community must not be confused with contrived clusters of bureaucrats, forever in search of a real purpose but always busy with organization charts and acronyms. A sense of urgency in tackling the most dangerous problems will have to be complemented by a sense for organic evolutionary growth. When the European Coal and Steel Community was created, the founders did not seek to establish a common monetary system – it will be forty years later when (and if) such a system materializes.

At this time, four broad missions of the defense community can be identified. First, eliminating the adversarial confrontation of nuclear forces – above all, the hair-trigger posture of these forces. Second, gradually abolishing secrecy between the two military establishments. Third, balancing measures against proliferation with the need to respect the legitimate sovereignty and independence of all nations. Fourth, cultivating responsible civilian control of the Russian military and – in both militaries – a sense of dedication to make the community serve the interests of both nations.

No hegemony

The more the defense community can promote democratic, civilian control of Russia's military, the less America's allies and friends, in Europe and in Asia, will have to fear an expansionist Muscovite Empire that would again coerce and invade its neighbours. The concept here for a new American-Russian military relationship stands in total contrast to Franklin D. Roosevelt's ill-fated concept for a security relationship with the Soviet Union after World War II. FDR's concept linked up (by necessity) with a Soviet Union that was advancing to conquer other nations, not with a Russia that had recently withdrawn and set other nations free. It was a relationship that floated on air, without any institutional links. It entailed an extreme tightening, not a reduction, in Soviet secrecy, and thus covered up unending Soviet lying. And worst of all, FDR based his attempted new relationship with the Soviet Union on his trust in Stalin's good will.

After the First World War, leading concepts for securing world peace were equally mistaken. The major powers in the 1920s sought, by negotiating several naval treaties, to stabilize a balance in the global strategic armaments of that time – the very purpose of the SALT and START agreements of recent years. After much hostile haggling among technical experts, treaties were concluded that incorpo-

rated elaborate definitions and restrictions designed to fix parity (and other ratios) in naval armaments. The goal was to keep the military confrontation peaceful, not to keep the peace by overcoming the military confrontation. Hence, the naval staffs continued to see each other as adversaries (even between the United States and Great Britain!) And seeing each other as adversaries, they modernized their navies and planned for war.

As if to put some icing on this crumbling cake, the major powers of the 1920s tried another concept – renouncing war as an instrument of national policy. Eleven years and five days before Hitler started World War II, the American Secretary of State Frank Kellogg and his French counterpart, Aristide Briand, signed with plenipotentiaries from Germany and a dozen other major powers the Kellogg-Briand Pact, which has since become an object of ridicule among historians.

By contrast, Jean Monnet's idea for a European economic community provides a historic example of a successful concept. Monnet's main goal was to start building a viable, meaningful institution to link France and Germany – nations that had fought three wars in the span of seventy years – and to let other European nations join. "The life of institutions," wrote Monnet in 1955, "is longer than that of people, and institutions can thus, if they are well constructed, accumulate and transmit the wisdom of successive generations."

After World War II, meaningful links between France and Germany could best be established in the economic sphere; after the Cold War, links between the United States and Russia can best be established in the military sphere. Economically, Russia is a supplicant. By contrast, in a military concordat with the United States, Russia can play a global role constructively. However, the national interests that the two nations could now pursue in common through a defense community remain strictly limited. When Russia's economic relations with the outside world gain in importance, its principal partners are likely to be Germany and Japan, not the United States. It is inconceivable that the United States and Russia would ever be seized by a convergent imperialist frenzy, to form a Washington-Moscow axis for global hegemony.

The purpose of the American-Russian defense community will not only remain limited, it will remain fully supportive of the enduring national interests of America's allies. Russia and America will want to eliminate the risk of global nuclear war – the paramount interest of every nation in the Northern Hemisphere. And their new military relationship will also serve to prevent military developments between them that would either threaten America's allies or Russia's national interests and territory. These purposes cannot be achieved by some vast multilateral conglomerate, such as the CSCE or the UN.

America's Atlantic and Pacific alliances have emerged from the Cold War as viable and valued security structures for the new era, linking old allies as well as enemies that fought each other in World War II. America's and Russia's armed forces have never fought a war against each other; they fought together as allies in two world wars. Their day has come to work together for the sake of both their nations and the world at large. ■

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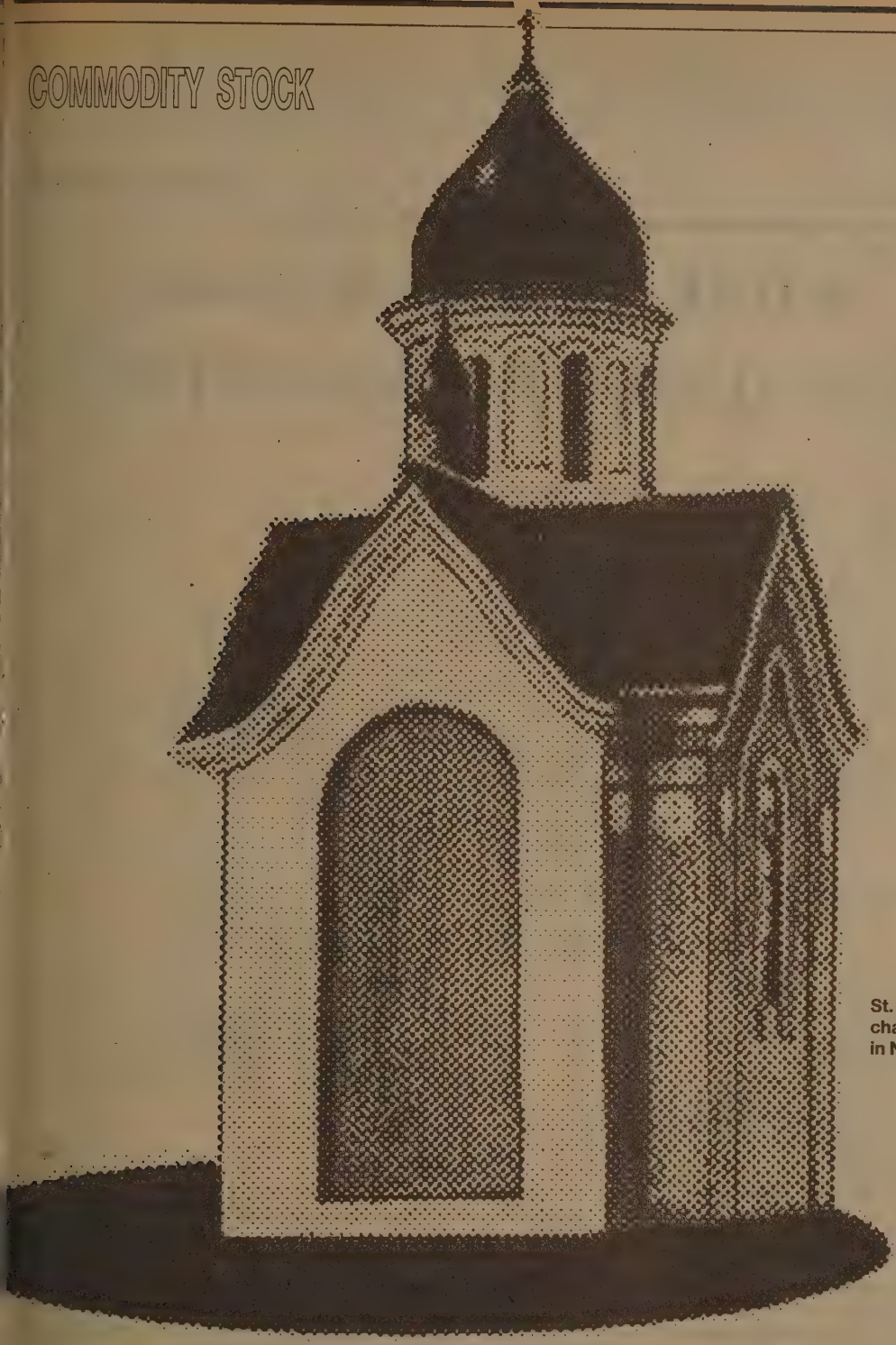

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NEW TIMES INVESTIGATES

At what price Soviet nuclear-power expertise?

Irina Lagunina and Oleg Vishnyakov

Rumours alleging that regimes like the one in present-day Iraq aspire to hire nuclear physicists formerly employed creating the Soviet Union's defence potential have been corroborated by a recent fact: Libya offers to hire Russian scientists for $2,000 a month, to help along its nuclear military programme. Following the initial reaction – "cheap offer" – the world realized the menace and shuddered with fear: what if someone from among the former Soviet scientific elite chooses to take the offer? The BBC reported the defection of a certain Kubov, of the Igor Kurchatov Atomic Energy Institute, to some Asian country, as well as deliberation on a similar offer by a certain Rozanov, of the same institute.

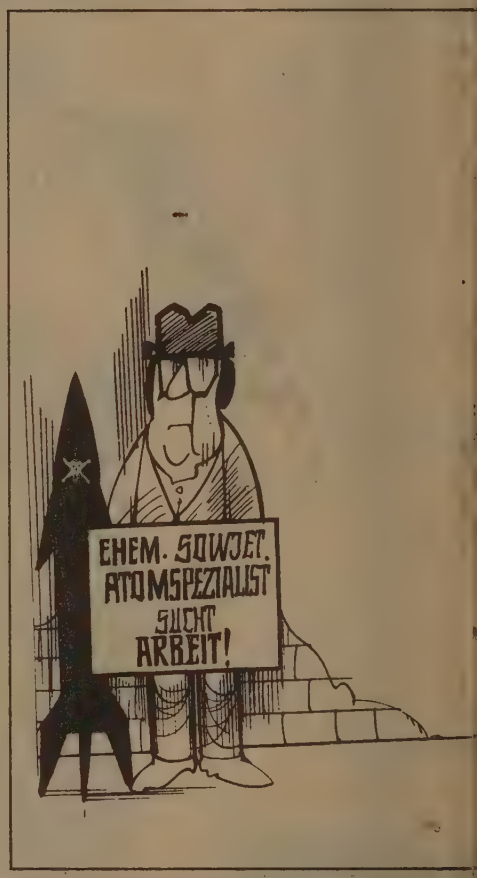
Both the West and the East are prepared to hire Russian nuclear scientists. *New Times* tries to find out who of them have already accepted such offers

Andrei Sakharov never let out secrets

Those whose work is ensuring security concerning nuclear scientists and guarding the sensitive information in the latter's possession from leaking say that the work is easy and agreeable. An anonymous head of the former KGB department for control of the country's nuclear projects told *NT* about his work.

In 1921, the Council of People's Commissars of the Russian Federation introduced security regulations with regards to, among other things, foreign travel by people trusted with secrets of national importance. Control for compliance with the regulations was entrusted to the state security agency, the police, and department chiefs. However, the regulations in question have never been enacted into law and thus allowed for arbitrary interpretation and decisions proceeding from "revolutionary conscience." According to the retired KGB General, this practice still remains in use.

The first Soviet A-bomb project was carried out by the specially organized First Chief Department under the USSR Council of Ministers, nominally headed by the then state-security chief, Lavrenty Beria. Eveyone leaving to work at the country's only, at that time, nuclear site in the Urals was



"Soviet nuclear physicist is after work"

screened for two months: all kinds of formal references were collected, from places of former employment and residence, as well as from local state-security branches. With the launch of the A-bomb industry, a special institution for training nuclear scientists was set up: the Moscow Institute of Engineering Physics, MIEP. The screening of the future cadre was narrow: no one even with a slight blemish in biography could be enrolled as a student.

The KGB had an annually revised register of sec-

rets in nuclear physics. Travelling abroad was forbidden for the majority of the nuclear scientists.

When a nuclear physicist had to be let out to attend a scientific conference abroad, the Minister himself had to assume responsibility for the scientist and vouch for him.

Of course, no one could keep pundits like Kurchatov or Alexandrov from going abroad. Incidentally, the international cooperation in nuclear engineering started with Igor Kurchatov's "spilling" of some Soviet military secrets.

In 1956, Khrushchev, Bulganin, and Kurchatov arrived, on board the *Ordzhonikidze* cruiser, to the UK. Speaking at

Drawing from Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (Germany)

a meeting of British scientists, Kurchatov let out certain details about the Soviet thermonuclear research. The world gasped with surprise. But Moscow didn't accuse Kurchatov of divulging state secrets: before the trip to the UK, the Soviet leaders decided to demonstrate to the world their "goodwill," as well as the extent of the country's military might, by means of leaking information which they no longer deemed sensitive.

Andrei Sakharov was among scientists whom the KGB never gave a clearance for a trip abroad. The Minister of Medium-Scale Machine-Building (alias atomic engineering) was also always against letting Andrei Sakharov out of the country or having contact with anyone abroad. The line of reasoning perhaps was: since a person refuses to accept the communist dictatorial regime, he can't keep state secrets he knows. Andrei Sakharov was doubly spied on: by the KGB Fifth Chief Directorate ("mind police") and the KGB Sixth Chief Directorate ("state secrets police"). If the former had many grudges against the rebellious Academician, then the latter had none (in words of that department's former chief, "Andrei Sakharov never let out a single state secret").

"No hanging around foreign embassies!"

In spite of the stringency of the secrecy-regulations requirements, some Soviet nuclear physicists managed to get abroad and successfully work for the United States, a country formerly unfriendly to the Soviet Union. A certain Vagin, physicist, Candidate of Sciences, refused to return to the USSR after the termination of his programme in Switzerland. He went to the USA. According to the KGB, Vagin was more of a bureaucrat than a scientist involved in actual research. Kiev University Professor Dyachenko remained in Canada after an advanced study course there. A Corresponding Member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, nuclear physicist Levich (former head of Chair at the MIEP) currently is lecturing at Tel Aviv University.

All told, there are two former Soviet scientists in Germany, nine in the USA, and several dozen more in Israel. Last year alone, 19 nuclear physicists left the USSR with the tide of Jewish emigration. According to intelligence sources, none of those experts could inflict sizeable damage to the country's security, since they couldn't have a comprehensive view of the nuclear programme and were not from **within** the secluded world of important nuclear scientists but rather on the **outside** of it.

The world in question is a fairly narrow one: the press and the experts both from the West and from Russia believe that it comprises 1,500–2,000 people who are behind this country's nuclear potential. There are dozens of thousands of other people involved: engineers, designers, and factory workers.

It is easy to keep an eye on the scientists since they live in closed communities in towns code-named Arzamas–16, Chelyabinsk–6, or Chelyabinsk–70. Ten officers in the Moscow KGB headquarters were enough to supervise security in all those towns around the country.

Says head of a laboratory in Chelyabinsk–70:

– I got a job here back in the 1960s. In those times, a clearance for work in Chelyabinsk–70 or Arzamas–16 was issued only after months of screening. Once you were admitted there, it was even harder to get on the outside, from behind barbed-wire fences. People were paid money in compensation for their inability to travel outside on vacation. After they decided to allow us out they all the same warned us against telling anyone about the place of employment or residence.

– Once when I had to leave for the Semipalatinsk nuclear testing ground I asked

An opinion from the LLL

When politicians from the United States, Europe, and Japan are arguing over what the Russian nuclear physicists really need – unemployment benefits, an international foundation for their employment, an invitation to reside in the USA, or involvement in the Star Wars programme – the American scientists are not prepared to discuss the problems their colleagues from the CIS are facing. **Yevgeny RUSAKOV** of *NT* interviewed **Jeffry GARBERSON** representing the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory, one of the leading US centres for development of new nuclear and other weapons.

New Times. Does the LLL have any plans for employment of experts from the CIS for joint research?

J.Garberson. The government is discussing the problem, but we at the LLL have nothing concrete in this respect. Your scientists, especially experts in magnetic nuclear synthesis, visited the LLL within the framework of an exchange programme recently. However, it was a brief informative visit.

NT. Can nuclear weapons designers quickly switch over to peace-oriented production?

J.G. It is hard to say. However, we are working on defence-related research as well as on non-military projects. The latter includes the Genom Project in which we want to understand and literally map out the sequence of molecules that make up the genetic nature of a human cell. The success of that research would revolutionize biology and medicine.

NEW YORK

permission for my mother-in-law to come here and help my wife about the house when I was away. They allowed her in but gave me a disapproving scowl which discouraged similar requests from me in the future.

– People are allowed to the town only when they have a special permit. However, it is a simpler matter in Semipalatinsk: there is a check-point there, like here, in Chelyabinsk–70, but you can easily bypass it on the steppe. As another sign of secretiveness, is that when we're in another city, we are allowed to stay only at certain hotels.

The man also told me that the automatic telephone exchange was introduced in Chelyabinsk–70 as late as 1991. Until then every telephone call outside had to be made from a special calling centre with tapped lines and open booths, so that every word spoken into the telephone could be heard by surrounding people.

Back in the 1970s, someone from Chelyabinsk–70 got severely reprimanded for violation of the regulations on secrets: his letter with "unauthorized mention of secret details about the town" got opened "by chance" at the post office. The residents deduced from the incident, that their correspondence has never been really confidential.

In another rumoured incident from 5–7 years ago, someone tried, in vain, to establish a contact with a foreign embassy. Since then, the security officers have been making a special point for people leaving on a business trip: "No hanging around foreign embassies or places teeming with foreigners!"

Little by little, people took that monitoring of their private lives in stride and gradually became oblivious to the life of greater freedom elsewhere. A retired KGB officer told us how in the 1980s it was decided to security restriction from certain towns (where new missiles were developed). Upon learning about the plan, missile designers staged a protest and demanded to keep the barbed-wire fences in place!

"The people feared the harshness of normal Soviet reality!"

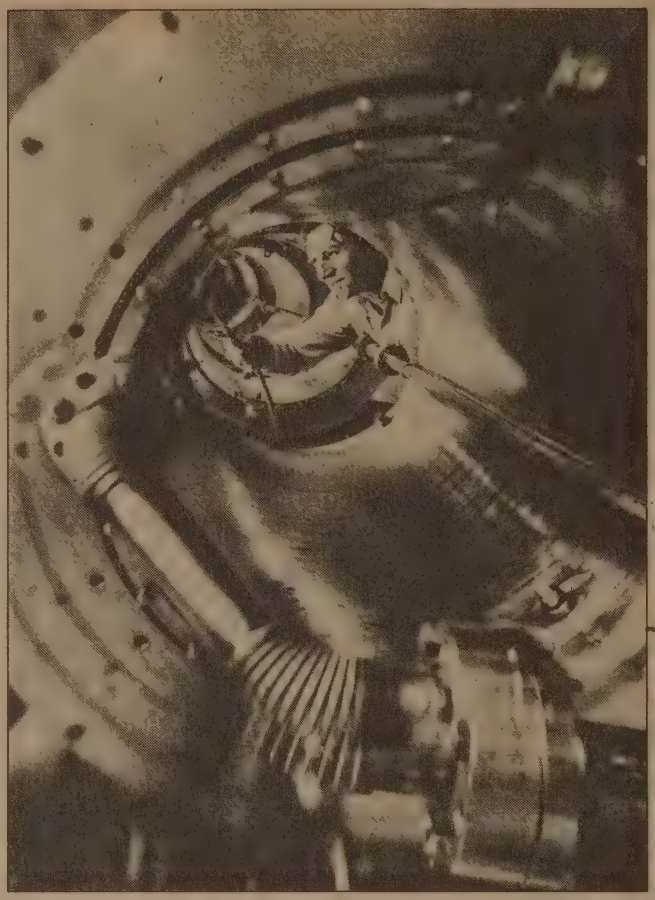
Indeed, life in "back-room towns" used to be much easier.

Pockets of "developed socialism"

The man heading a laboratory in Chelyabinsk–70 has a two-room apartment for himself and two other members of his family, in a five-storey brick block typical for the town. In the past, the shops were full of goods and food. He even used to buy furniture for his relatives living "on the outside." But now scarcity has hit the town as well.

He boasts that Chelyabinsk–70 has more cars than Moscow's main ring-road in peak-hours. He also admits that there have since recently been cases of theft and vandalism of cars never registered before. However, it is a far cry between car theft and nuclear secrets theft. Rationing of butter, meat, and cereals has been introduced in Chelyabinsk–70. But the "special towns" are still better supplied with food and consumer goods than any of the surrounding towns and cities.

These pockets of "developed socialism" are sanctuaries for a caste of nuclear scientists, a special breed. The majority of them are "people of the 1960s," who are devoted to their science and work. They are believed to dislike any distraction from their research. The former head of the KGB Sixth Chief Directorate characterizes them as follows: "I can't imagine nuclear physicists starting a prodemocracy movement or supporting nationalists. The scientists value people according to their contribution in actual work, rather than by their political allegiance. This is what determines the psychological climate within their collectives. They are seldom concerned with political matters." However, political matters often interfere into the scientists' life and break up its routine. Moscow seems not to need the nuke any more.



In the clinch of nuclear problems...

ITAR–TASS photo

We found a unique ad at the "Classified" page of the *Vsyo Dlya Vas* (Everything for You) newspaper:

"Rare know-how! If you are after materially and morally rewarding work, remit 10 roubles to bank account... at the... Bank in Arzamas-16, Nizhny Novgorod Region. Send us an addressed envelope and a confirmation of payment. We will answer you immediately. I'm Michael, my address is..."

Hopefully, the "rare know-how" in question is related to something other than A-bomb technology and that Michael is not peddling national secrets at a ten ruble note a shot.

Al Qaddafi didn't know it

Nations aspiring to build sophisticated nukes want, in fact, two categories of experts for this: theoretical scientists who possess sensitive information in huge quantities, and actual designers whose work is also classified as top secret.

In the past, attempts to buy their confidence or make them spill the secrets were unsuccessful, as a rule. In the 1950s, continental China came very close to mass-scale production of the A-bomb. The Soviet leaders invariably ignored China's requests for expertise necessary for that. So, the Chinese secret service started to woo Soviet nuclear experts. They got nothing. Eventually, the Chinese got the secrets they needed from Americans.

The USA itself tried to learn the composition of the titanium alloy used in Soviet missiles, aircraft, and submarines. They learned it only after the Soviet government itself opted to tell it.

In late 1970s, propositions to earn good money emanated also from Libya. How-

ever, that story still has more questions to it than answers.

Among other things, the Igor Kurchatov Atomic Energy Institute helps to create nuclear research reactors and centres in foreign countries, for example, in Syria, Cuba, Egypt, Iraq, and Vietnam. In mid-1970s, a nuclear-research programme was developed for Libya, and February 24, 1977, saw the signing of a contract for building a multiple scientific centre in Tajura, Libya. The project was intensively carried through because the contract specified the construction term as merely five years. The IAEA had quite a few questions it wanted the USSR to provide answers to, but Moscow denied its own involvement with the Libyan nuclear research. The Soviet nuclear physicists in Libya were working "for peaceful purposes." Once, though, two Libyans approached Soviet experts with a proposal to work on Qaddafi's nuclear military project.

The Soviet physicists immediately reported the incident to the KGB officer at the USSR Embassy. Moscow demanded explanations from Qaddafi. The latter quieted down the rising scandal pleading that the two Libyans had acted on their own accord and that Libya didn't plan to recruit Soviet experts.

That story was told us by a retired KGB officer. But when we tried to learn the names of the scientists involved, the Deputy Director of the Igor Kurchatov Atomic Energy Institute, Anatoly Savenkov emphatically denied the story: "There was nothing of the kind, nor could there be anything like that." Who was right?

Uranium from a Dyushambe market

When the Western press started to write about the possibility of Soviet nuclear physicists' defections, *Stern* came up with a scoop: its reporter was offered to buy 15 kilogrammes of enriched uranium-235 from a dealer at a Dyushambe market! *Reuters'* comment was: the amount is sufficient for producing one nuclear explosive device. *Stern's* report hasn't been refuted. We turned to the Kurchatov Institute and were told that an atomic bomb requires at least 25 kilogrammes of uranium, according to the IAEA. However, it is not the actual amount that matters here.

Natural uranium contains about 0.6 percent of uranium-235. There is a uranium-enrichment plant near Dyushambe where uranium is separated from dead rock. The enriched uranium is transported to Russia where uranium-235 is separated from uranium-238. An atomic bomb requires at least 20-percent content of uranium-235, and a high-quality weapon requires the rate of 90 per cent at least. That means that uranium from the Tabushar enrichment plant, which was offered to the *Stern* reporter on the market couldn't be used for producing a bomb. Besides, the idea of sale of uranium on the market is crazy in itself: it is the same as trying to peddle 15 kilogrammes of sand from the local gold-mining area.

As for the principal design of the bomb, there's nothing secret about it, unlike in 1946. The chief difficulty here is design and production of a sophisticated and highly-effective weapon, or a weapon of special purpose: for example, with an insignificant blast but huge neutron radiation, or vice versa.

A few years ago, an American popular science magazine published an article by a university student of physics, with a recipe for "cooking up" a home-made A-bomb. The experts say that the ground technologies involved were described correctly and drawn exclusively from open publications. However, to make an experimental bomb may be easy, and to create an arsenal of sophisticated weapons – on a par with US or Russian bombs – is a very different matter. A single bomb can hardly serve a military purpose.

Inroads

January 14, 1992, President Boris Yeltsin of Russia signed a decree on protection of his country's state secrets. That decree announced all the previous USSR acts and governmental decisions on the matter effective until adoption of new ones. The intelligence and counterintelligence thus got *raison d'être* and had their work cut out for them. However, representatives of the new Russian community of secret services admit in private conversations that there is no reason for worrying about the future of Russian nuclear experts. None of them has tried to defect to the East. Besides, the recent law regulating the matter of travel in and out of the country envisages a five-year quarantine for persons who have access to official secrets.

However, there are no such restrictions in the USA, for example. Any US citizen can leave that country at any time, according to law. But in the USA, the company warns the prospective employee about travel restrictions involved in top-security work for the company, lasting for as long as the company wishes. Fifteen per cent of state employees granted access to secret information undergo preliminary screening during the time of which the person is paid either his or her salary or an unemployment benefit. All in all, the USA spends $220m for this purpose annually.

In the former USSR, only 0.5 percent of employees underwent comprehensive screening. In 1989, the USSR spent 90m rubles for that. Now, it is 40m rubles. However, the general opinion is that secrets protection in the CIS is at least as good as in the USA.

Who can benefit from rumours about Russian nuclear scientists' possible defection to the side of Asian dictators?

Primarily, it is the new state security agencies which feel themselves redundant. They need proof of their usefulness to the new country. The press articles alleging that, apart from the Soviet physicists' readiness to emigrate, there is another menace: ordinary Soviets have become imprudent about their contacts with foreigners.

The military-industrial complexes of the former USSR and the USA would also stand to benefit from a scandal which can bring them more investments. The USA is prepared to pay Soviet physicists a salary and invest into the Russian non-military nuclear projects. The USA's military-industrial complex can get a few more billion dollars under the pretext of protection from the possible nuclear threat of the Arab East.

The Russian government is also interested in fanning the scandal ironed out: this can mean a more potent flow of dollars from the West to Russia. Besides, the West will be reminded of its dependence on the former USSR's military might and become more tractable.

There is yet another consideration. Highlighting the scandal, and using the pretext to increase nuclear physicists' salaries and attract foreign capital, the Russian leaders are creating new privileges for the country's physicists, giving them an opportunity to normally work on and "survive" the tide of conversion of defence industries to non-military production, during the physicists hardest times associated with neglect of the fundamental sciences. Thus, Russia is going to keep for itself the former USSR's best "nuclear brains" and avoid excruciating explanations and diplomatic effort.

What about Kubov and Rozanov? We were told at the Kurchatov Institute that there had never been anyone there under the name of Kubov. As a matter of fact, we interviewed Rozanov, and he denied receiving any invitations from the East. He simply mentioned the possibility of that contingency in an interview for a Canadian newspaper. It was a matter of misunderstanding on the part of the interviewer.

THE CHARITY SHOP

WE ARE IN DESPERATE NEED OF DONATIONS

Sowing fertile seeds

Vladimir Zhitomirsky,
New Times special correspondent

Everyone, rich or poor, needs charity in Britain

"They're completely new, both these dresses, it's just that recently I lost a lot of weight and they became too baggy on me," prounouncing these words, the woman relaxed, focussing her gaze on the shop-assistant receiving the goods. The woman who had walked in wasn't young, and wore a light-orange dress, faded from many washings, and worn-out boots. The guy standing behind the counter, with both sides of his head shaved and a tall crest of hair from his forehead to the back of his neck, wearing a short leather vest with multiple metallic trinkets hanging off it, attentively listened to the customer, and gently interjecting that he himself was no expert on the subject, called someone to help. From below, with a dainty cup of coffee in her hands, appeared a young woman in something knitted and half transparent. Instantanteously an appraisal and an answer:

"We are prepared to offer you, madam, either two sterling pounds or four pounds in vouchers."

"What are you talking about, vouchers?" the woman in orange became agitated, "I need money."

People bring here with clean hearts worn and, quite often, not the cleanest of clothing

"Please, here you are..."

Of course, this is not the elegant department store Harrods, nor the glittering Marx and Spencer, nor the enormous C&A. This is a shop, haphazardly layed out among several floors, connected by steep staircases and narrow corridors, walls provoking you with a motley assortment of colours, and at times extremely outrageous graffitti. Here the most unexpected of items can be found: radio and television apparati, computers and typewriters, water skis and irons, vacuum cleaners and golf clubs,a sink and a Rolex watch, books and bycicles, antique jewellery and a triangular pennant announcing "The All-Union Game of October Revolution Children around the Land of October Revolution". (By the way, in that honorary place, directly behind the back of the punky shop assistant, yet another red pennant is hung for decoration, with the words "Town Committee of the Young Communist League, Public Education Det, Town of Lyubertsy". Could it be that even Lyubertsy boys have visited this shop?)

This place buys it all

The store's niches are full of clothing. In front of the entrance to one of the smallish rooms is a hand-written notice: "Nothing in this area costs more than 2 pounds". For comparison's sake: a one-way trip on the London tube can cost more than 8 sterling pounds. I asked one of the saleswomen, "Why are there such cheap prices here?" And I received a remarkable answer: "Because this is a cheap-priced store." Though I appreciated the woman's humour, I nonetheless attempted to find someone who would explain to me how this could be.

"Let Brian give you the story," "You need to have a talk with Brian," "Only Brian can give you the run down" – you could hear the shop workers of this bizzarre little business cry out. Where could this mysterious Brian be found? "He's around the corner in our next-door store." There, for real, was the same kind of a shop, but stuffed with records, cassets and compactdisks. Brian, just as they told me, was really to be found here, but to reach him was only possible on an internal phone. I call. I explain: a journalist would like to ask a few questions about the store. "Give the receiver to Julia, I'll tell her to answer your questions."

And so I didn't succeed in getting a glimpse of Brian Abrams. And that's too bad: after all he gave birth to a fantastic idea – how to organize commerce at very low prices, thereby helping people who live at a low income level. As it turned out, young, sprightly and smiling black-haired Julia

Everett knew the deal. What Brian thought up, she explained, when we settled down near the shelves of cassets, on things resembling stools, consisted in the following. "First of all," she said, "we buy from people everything – used, worn, broken. Secondly, we offer to pay out to them immediately a third of the price for which we intend to sell the item. Or, as they like it, we can pay out two-thirds, but in vouchers for the purchase of things only in our family of stores."

"Working here is quite interesting," continued Julia. "Dress as you like, new impressions all the time, today you're behind the counter in a record store, tomorrow in sport-wares, the next day in a clothing store. But most significantly – you get to be yourself. You work side by side with people who are interesting to you, mostly young people. How many people in all?! Around 60 in all our stores combined," she answers. "Doesn't it sometimes feel like a big game – constantly rotating stores, chatting with one another, dressing up in unusual garments?" "Well you know, a bit," laughs Julia, "but in general, the work is far from easy: from 10 a.m. till 8 p.m., and seven days a week. It's as if Brian wants us to be always available, around the clock, but luckily, that isn't the case yet. It pays, it's true, not badly. I wouldn't be earning more if I worked in some kind of office."

"Well, OK, Julia, but what lies ahead? After all, you finished college and received an education as an art historian." "Oh, I'll stick around for several years more, and then it'll become clear what my next step should be," she blessed me with that marvellous smile which greets hordes of visitors flocking into this quaint store. I myself saw then how she works. Joyfully and immersed.

New homes for the aged in Islington were opened by Princess Alexandra

Please, no electrical appliances

Britain's economy, by its own standard, survives no better time. And although prestigious department stores are overflowing in a flood of goods, very many Britons prefer to purchase items in discount stores and small shops. There's more than a few shoppers in the stores with the "Charity" sign in the window. There the prices are not only affordable, but the main pull is the incredible variety – from children's clothing and home utensils, to books and locks for gasoline tanks. It's true that the things you come across have most often been used, though it is possible to find new things as well.

What makes the prices so cheap? The secret lies in that all these goods are donations that require quick realization. Despite any "hard times", the English tradition of charity lives on.

Christina McLaven, an energetic auburn-haired woman, with a low chesty voice, told of similar circumstances where she works. She is responsible for a network of so called "temporary" stores, under the direction of the charitable organization Notting Hill Housing Trust, helping the homeless. Our conversation takes place in the midst of a spacious room, sinking with the weight of endless bundles of clothes, shoes, books and records.

They accept everything here, with the exception of electrical appliances – they're often broken, therefore it's a risk, says Christina. "As you would have it, of course, someone left an electrical iron in any case," she laughs thereupon taking on a more serious tone. "In addition to the permanent charity stores there are also the temporary ones, like ours. We open them on a site which has been fred up for a certain period: a firm closed or a company moved – we usually are privy to such information, and we take over this unoccupied space. They don't charge us rent, we pay for electricity and any other necessary services. Although, right here, this space is without heat, running water and, pardon me, but even a toilet, therefore there are no other expenses."

"Temporary stores crop up like mushrooms – in the last week, Christina claims, she succeeded in opening five new ones. For the homeless there appear new chances to obtain a roof over their heads. It so happens that sales are not the only means of fund raising, direct donations are also part of the overall picture. Question – "Why do you think people give away their personal belongings?" – stumping my interviewee. "Well," she explains, "if you move to a different city or in with your parents, why wouldn't you give us what you had no use for? Or if you simply don't use the thing anymore? The more so that it's known that our profits go towards building homes and apartments. How can this not give people inner comfort."

"Don't some of the doners expect something in return – a bit of glory or a reputation as a do-gooder?" "Oh no," answers the shopkeeper, "in most cases donors, in general, prefer to remain anonymous. The companies giving us a space to work usually aren't looking to reep any benefits from it, not one of them ever used their move as a vehicle to advertise themselves."

"And how is the daily labour of the shop organized? After we moved in here we hung in the window a help wanted sign. For a start we brought some goods from our other stores, and began to work receiving the goods, sorting them out and then selling them. The word gets out quickly that a new charity store has shot up, special advertising isn't necessary. We have people literally break the door down..."

"How do we pay our workers? I would say an upper-middle salary – they work, after all, without ever putting their hands down, and our conditions, as I've told you, aren't particularly good: one has to run in order to wash one's hands to the neighboring store on the opposite side of the street."

"What do people donate? A million things, from antique and valuable items to goods which have completely lost their "desirability". At times, you often need to get advice from a specialist, who is adept at pricing things more accurately, while in other instances, you wrap it all up in a packet and sell it, for a small sum, to an old-clothing dealer, who also calls on us." Usually, Christina herself names the selling price. She has solid experience. By the way, what would she advise those wanting to open a similar operation in Russia?

To begin with," she said, "you need to locate the major private business outlets,

The FWA organized a mountain-climbing show right in the capital; the charity event raised 25 thousand pounds

which from time to time close their stores or transplant them to another spot, freeing up, for the time being, a site from which to sell. It's necessary that the owners of the companies go along with the deal based on their good will. Most of your stores belong to the government? In that case let the government offer to charity organizations the temporary use of store sites. How else?"

At this moment in the conversation I remembered the infinite number of hanging signs, "Under renovation," on locked doors of stores; inside, no such renovation was occuring, not even the sign of a paint brush. No goods to be found. It would be interesting what kind of an answer you would hear if you proposed to use a store site for a charity operation.

By the way, why is it that Christina McLaven, a dress designer by education, took up such a nerve-racking business? "But how can't it bring you satisfaction to be working in the service of those to whom life has been less fortunate?" she answers.

This brings joy

I stopped in at many stores around London where the sign "Charity" hung in the window. It most instances they are "permanent" and not "temporary". They are owned by various charity societies, for example, The Family Welfare Association (FWA). In one of them, behind the cash register stands Helen. Before she worked in a grade school, but now she is already seven years in the Charity stores. Six days a week everyone inside is working for what is called the social good, without any kind of pay. Here there are either pensioners or those who are temporarily out of a job. They sell that which is brought as a gift. "And if it happens to be filthy?" I ask. "We take it home and wash it ourselves," answers Helen. "Several stores have a washing machine, they have it easier, we don't have it so lucky." And if something isn't sold over a long stretch of time? "We wait two or three weeks," she explains, "thereupon we send it on over to another one of our stores. There it will find new buyers, and a higher chance of someone needing it." And the donors, who are they overall? "Anyone at all – from pensioners to students, people of any age. Everyone whom giving help to those who need it brings joy."

By the way, charity – this is a far cry from a game for some kind of rich folks, who are attoning for their sins, or for those who wish to feed their vanity. In the end, fine, let there be such people among the donors. As long as the aid is actual and tangible.

Let's say that the Notting Hill Housing Trust collected satisfactory financial means in order to have 1000 homes to be used as temporary lodgings, for those who need a place to live. In the coming year construction of another 470 is accomplished or begun. From the moment of the fund's founding in 1963 due to it's efforts 20 thousand Londoners received a roof over their heads.

The FWA created whole blocks of housing for the elderly. Not long ago, new homes in the capital's neighbourhood of Islington were opened by Princess Alexandra. I notice that the official patron of the Association is none other than the Queen. Collecting funds has enabled the FWA to bring many social programmes to life. Its specialists consult parents who are having trouble with their children, provide nursing for the sick, visit the lonely and provide for the necessities of the most needy. For example, one resident of the East End, who went on a pension in connection to a serious ailment afflicting tailors, received a refrigerator at the expense of the association. A London resident, Jamaica-born woman, was able, with the help of the association, to buy a washing machine. And still many, many more Britons speak well about the Association's good deeds.

The work of the charitable organization Oxfam goes far beyond the borders of Great Britain: the funds gathered here, by the charity stores, are distributed for aid to governments of the Third World. There are programmes for the training of farmers, fishermen, entrepreneurs, in brief, much is done to improve the plight of the poor in Nicaragua and Iraq, in Mozambique and the Philippines.

To the same ends, yet another charitable organization is making a substantial contribution – The Sue Ryder Fund, carrying the name of its founder. Its 380 Charity stores provide financial support for the impoverished and ill of other countries, as well as to many charitable projects in Britain. One figure: 265 thousand people received concrete assistance from the fund.

I could name still more charitable organizations, but probably the examples I've given are sufficient. It's time to address ourselves to another issue, one of our arrogant attitude towards different forms of "The Salvation Army". Such an attitude has gone out of the door with the old notion that "pity is insulting". Taking pity is absolutely necessary, let them call it "sympathy," names hardly matter. Charity, the creation of grace, is very, very essential. It's important for those who need it – the poor, the infirm, and the lonely. And it's an important part of life for those who give it, who aren't in need, who didn't think earlier about the bad-off and the miserable, but are prepared to turn to their side of life, though while using the rich English experience.

LONDON–MOSCOW

Photos from the magazine Family Lines (Great Britain)

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AVIS

FROM THE XXth CENTURY POLITICAL THOUGHT

Introduced by *New Times* analyst **Rostislav Zolotaryov**

As I write introductions to excerpts from books or articles by "old masters" appearing in *New Times*, I often get the impression (which, I know, is shared by the readers) that these texts describing the situation in Russia on the eve of, and just after, the revolution were written yesterday. And I recall the words uttered by an underground Russian thinker in the seventies. "Sooner or later, he said, we shall all wake up one day on the dirty, sooty and blood-stained snow of 1918. We had a hangover then, but the worst is yet to come." Well, it has come already ...

The article that follows dates back to the early twenties, not to 1918. It first appeared in Petrograd's *Ekonomist* magazine in 1922. We have already reprinted from that magazine articles by Pitirim Sorokin on the effect of famine and militarism on the morale and functioning of society. Reminiscences of hunger open the article by the Russian economist P.Chubutsky as well.

P.Chubutsky's answer to the classical question of "What is to be done?" is: in order to put an end to economic chaos, we should give top priority to the restoration of agriculture, help the peasant – the hard-working peasant, that is – stand on his own feet, make him free to work as he thinks fit, not interfere with him and not crush him with a tax burden. The industrialist who processes farm produce into food, makes clothes, builds homes and manufactures farm implements, should also be given freedom and support.

Those at the top then also began to scratch their heads. They introduced the New Economic Policy, making life a bit easier for the peasant. As it later turned out, however, the New Economic Policy had been intended as a mere expediency and didn't last long. In the same year of 1922, the contributors to liberal journals were banished – some abroad, others to the Solovki concentration camps, and still others to God knows where...

Many names have sunk into oblivion. P.Chubutsky, alas, is no exception – we know next to nothing about him. A well-known economist in the early twenties, he was "withdrawn from circulation" after the closure of the liberal journals. We don't even know whether Chubutsky was an alias or his real name. In any case, he is not to be found in the lists of those exiled or executed (in the lists which have been made public, at least).

As to the article below, it is certainly worth the reader's while. It may give some food for thought to those who still do not want private farming to come back to the Russian countryside.

A new Populist movement

P.Chubutsky

We take famine as a social calamity. Carrion-eating and cannibalism wound our sensibilities.

The state should make every effort lest anyone should die of hunger in the country, and provide food for all the famine victims. Any civilized state can do that if it tries hard enough.

In a situation where wholesale trade is nonexistent, transport no longer works, and railway freight is looted on an unprecedented scale, the state alone can cope with the problems involved in supplying provisions to the needy regions. But whereas the procurement, transportation and delivery of seed grain can be done by the state only, it would be a mistake to think that sowing should also be made a responsibility of the state. This is another example of state coercion being useless in certain spheres of the economy, or bringing negligible results. In these spheres, success depends on the will and spirit of the grassroots. They are the motive force of the economy. It depends on the peasant's will, on his reason, his physical ability and his morale whether he sows the seeds delivered to him, and how large a field he'll sow with them.

The view that the state can compel any person who has reached a certain age to work is more controversial but demonstrable nevertheless. Our country's record of labour conscription has shown what it consists in, how it is enforced, and what results this forced labour brings. It is beyond doubt, though, that the state can by no means compel every peasant to be his own master, to run a private farm. The state is powerless to compel a peasant to run a farm, but it can easily compel a farm owner to give up farming or to gear it to his elementary needs only.

The wholesale slaughter of cattle, worn-out equipment, the shrinking of seed stock, and hunger-caused emaciation – these are the factors in making peasants all but an extinct species. A peasant is a small-owner first and foremost. His social function is to bring grain and farm produce to the market. A peasant who makes only just enough produce to meet his own needs and offers nothing for sale is of zero value from the state and social viewpoint, and a peasant who hasn't got enough to eat is a negative value.

The resolutions adopted by almost every meeting, congress and conference today suggest that the "factor of production" is now central to any economic policy, and that all phenomena are judged from this angle. But, as in many other cases, a frequent repetition of a word does not necessarily furnish the key to its meaning. In the same resolutions you will often find other old words which are in glaring contradiction with the predominance of the "production viewpoint."

It is true that the present-day reality teaches us to attach no special importance to words, resolutions, decrees and legal norms. All these words and norms are of no use unless backed by guarantees, and the guarantees are given by life only. A verbal makeshift, even if decorated with a socialist title, may fossilize into a rigid legal institution. And on the contrary, a solemnly declared fundamental tenet may be either revoked by a new decree, or devoid of all sense. For all the talk about abolishing it, money, for instance, has consolidated as a social institution. On the other hand, the formal replacement of the food surplus appropriation by a food tax failed to prevent the difference between the two being actually reduced to nought by circumstances in certain places...

If it can be drawn at all, foreign capital ought to be used for the vital purpose of improving our monetary system without which all talk about credit is so much hot air. But how can we obtain even small rural credit without establishing hereditary rights, without reliable property rights which guarantee firm property ownership and legality of property transfer to another persons?

Social thought should have a point of departure in relation to which all the other tasks could be estimated and sorted out. Agriculture alone can be such a point of departure for Russia. The interests, needs and

problems of the peasant should be in the focus of public and the state's attention. The entire national economy should pivot on them...

As for cultural values closely connected with the development of urban life, we are in for a still greater degradation probably for a regress from the level of the 1850s our urban culture is at now to that of the early 19th century. In my previous article I pointed out, proceeding from the statistics of October-November 1921, related to bread prices and professional writers' emoluments, that after the war the cost of brainwork products fell to one-seventieth that of bread. Further price changes made this proportion still more striking. By the beginning of March, the price of a pound of bread amounted to 75,000 rubles, and an author's fee, to three million rubles per printer's sheet, so literary work came to be cheaper than farm work by a factor of 250 if compared with correlating values which existed before WWI. What's more, a compositor is paid seven times more for setting up an article than the author is for writing it. This process, dangerous to our weak urban culture, of depreciating the supreme forms of mental work has not stopped yet. Further withdrawal of state funds from the city may only make matters worse. And still we have to deliberately resign ourselves to this temporary decline in our cultural standard. After all, it is not only our culture and our state machinery, but the very existence of the Russian people as an ethnographic unit that depend on the state of agriculture, on grain production, rather than on the development of the industry and transport.

The main element in Russia's rebirth is the *muzhik* – the peasant, the agricultural worker and the farm owner. Without him there's no need to even think about a great country

The revival of private farming is Russia's only salvation. An end should be put to experimenting upon peasants, whatever the motives behind these social experiments. The reason why the populist movement of old did so much harm was exactly that by lamenting over the peasant's lot it made the government's and society's attitude to peasants rather unrealistic. The authorities never tired of saying how sorry they were for poor peasants living from hand to mouth, but no sooner had a peasant emerged from stark poverty than he was automatically transferred to the "kulak" ("rural bourgeois") category, and "social measures" were taken against him... If a peasant is to organize a rational system of farming on his land rather than become an undernourished pensioner kept by the state and by philanthropists, he should be given firm, clear-cut and hereditary rights and freedom of action...

Preference should be given to hard-working and efficient peasants rather than to good-for-nothings. In any case, a businesslike and enterprising farmer should not be prevented from making good, on the grounds that his neighbour cannot keep up with him.

The new Populist movement should abandon the egalitarian envy characteristic of the old one. Uniform poverty is not a creative factor, on the contrary it can only cause a further decline in the welfare standard of each and all.

No modern state can exist without heavy industry, and each state seeks to promote it (at least in the shape of munitions and transport factories) at any cost.

The development of, and state support for any other industry should serve the needs of agriculture and the farm produce market. The principle of personal freedom should come first here, too. Any restrictions imposed on any industry working for the city market is bound to have negative consequences. If Russian industrialists manage to organize the production of consumer goods competitive with foreign makes, this will keep the ruble's exchange rate high. When the situation here comes back to normal, it will be in our national interests to demand state support for the consumer goods manufacturing industries.

As to the rural industry intended to step up the intensity of agriculture, it ought to be given every assistance even in the present conditions. The promotion of intensive cropping, the industrialization of the peasant household and making it market-orientated – these are the only ways to revive Russian culture and the Russian state. It is from this angle that cooperation in general, and agricultural cooperation in particular, should be viewed. The theory in accordance with which cooperation is a road to socialism is still much favoured by our cooperators. Reality has exposed the fallacy of this viewpoint by showing that wherever socialism is imposed in earnest, it begins with suppressing the economic freedom which alone can keep cooperation alive. Nevertheless, our conservative high-brow cooperators have not even begun to revise the ideological principles of cooperation.

Such a revision is necessary. Indeed, a close look at agricultural cooperation will reveal that it pursues national and social rather than socialist objectives. As a mass movement, cooperation brings out the cream of a nation, those who are more knowledgeable, more industrious, more competent thus promoting economic progress...

The social importance of cooperation consists in that it rests upon, and proceeds from personal freedom and, at the same time, combines this personal freedom with the interests of many, if not all, and brings individual interests in harmony with public ones, which is of special importance in today's Russia. It is to bring out leaders and to show the way, to encourage new social relations which emphasize the human personality, this basis of any economic progress...

The Populist movement is crucial to the revival of Russia. This, however, is not going to be the tearful, sentimental or revolutionary-utopian Populist movement of old which was ignorant of the people and addressed itself, instead, to the mob with its elementary destructive and self-seeking instincts. A nation is an organism, and all its parts are organically interconnected. The new Populist movement should serve national and state interests. Instead of trying to "patronize" the nation, it should promote freedom of economic initiative guarded by the state, guarantee everyone equal rights, personal security and legal protection of one's property.

Prepared for publication by Andrei Edemsky

Last September, the Communist Party's theoretical journal *Kommunist* was renamed *Svobodnaya Mysl* (Free Thought). The new theoretical and political journal is headed by **Nail Bikkenin,** 61, Associate Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences. He avoids making public statements and giving TV interviews by quoting the poet Tvardovsky, who once noted: "It's enough to read a periodical to know the views and stand of its editor."

In Bikkenin's opinion, the journal should "publicly discuss the most constructive and scientifically grounded ideas of social development." Strange as it may seem, what Bikkenin says is true, and it was also true in the past.

Kommunist was a paradoxical journal. Formally, it was a theoretical organ of the Communist Party, which carried articles setting out pseudo-Marxist and new, genuinely socialist ideas. In the years of *perestroika,* when the alignment of forces changed, it was on the liberal flank of the inner-party struggle, publishing very unorthodox articles and judgements which infuriated retrogrades. Among the editors of *Kommunist* were such outstanding figures as literary critic Igor Dedkov and sociologist and economist Otto Lacis. The editorial board cherished Yakovlev's hope that the emancipation of Marxist thought from Stalinist dogmas and bureaucratic narrow-mindedness was the key to social development.

Now that the rules of the game have changed drastically and, voluntarily or not, *Svobodnaya Mysl* has thrown off the former "communist" attire, Nail Bikkenin and his colleagues have to tackle the same problem, but "turned upside down," so to speak. There is no censorship of Politburo, and there is no privileged position either. The journal has to win readers again. In the past, it was the intellectual elite of the party. Today it is the entire intellectual elite concenred with social problems.

The editors of *Svobodnaya Mysl* will have to bring home to intellectuals that the journal has not simply changed its name or even skin, that the change is more substantial. On top of that, the journal, as any other periodical, is faced with a formidable task of surviving in the present-day market.

* * *

"People like simple articles which do what they are bought for, and if someone buys a ball-point pen he does so in order to write with it, not for some other purpose," says **Marcel Bich,** who designed the world famous "ball-point." Bich has always followed this principle strictly, and therefore during 40 years of business activity he has sold 55 billion simple ball pens.

Early in January, 1992, the 78-year-old baron Marcel Bich said he would resign. The baron was married three times, and the public tried to guess who of his 12 children will take over the company. The choice has been made at last. The new head of the company is his 46-year-old son Bruno, who till now ran the subsidiaries in the United States. Marcel Bich has retained the post of honorary chairman of one of his enterprises.

The history of the success and rise of Joseph Biro from Turin, who later adopted the pseudonym Marcel Bich, is considered a "20th-century tale." The idea of designing the wonder pen struck him when he saw how children tarred small metal balls and rolled them on the asphalted pavement. However, the initial steps of the ball-pen designer were not easy. The early Bich pens scratched paper, leaked and left blots. But later Marcel Bich ousted fountain-pens which could not withstand the "offensive" of their new varieties.

* * *

Last summer, **Stanislav Gulyayev,** 31, deputy director-general of the commercial and charity company Teresa, took a serious interest in the socio-psychological rehabilitation of disabled children.

In their spare time doctors, teachers and psychologists, chosen according to their professional qualities, try to ensure interesting leisure recreation for such children on two tourist routes: Moscow-Petersburg and the Golden Ring of Russia. Children go on charity excursions together with their parents, often in whole groups. Teresa pays all the expenses for lodging, meals and the cultural programme.

Christmas gifts, a

Satyajit Ray's "intimate cinema"

On March 30, 1992, **Satyajit Ray,** the patriarch of Indian cinema, will receive the Special Oscar Award. He is the first Indian to win this prestigious prize.

Born in Calcutta, he often went to the city's only cinema in which Hollywood silent films were shown to the piano accompaniment. It was Vittorio de Sica's film, *Bicycle Thieves,* which made him a film director. Ray decided that he would also work with non-professional actors and shoot his films in real conditions. Local critic-writers describe his style as an amalgam of Hollywood techniques, Italian neo-realism, early Russian revolutionary fervour (Eisenstein's films) and the Benghali tradition. Ray himself believes that he has chosen the field of "intimate cinema, the cinema of mood and atmosphere." In everything that he does the ultimate focus is on the inner recesses of the human mind.

Ray's first film, *Song of the Little Road,* launched him into international fame. *The Lonely Wife,* which is regarded by Ray as his most perfect film, deals with social taboos in relations between man and woman. Two of his latest films, *An Enemy of the People* and *Branches and Twigs,* are devoted to problems of morality in Indian life.

After a serious disease Ray was ordered by doctors to lead a secluded life in his modest Calcutta flat. He rarely gives interviews and thinks that the public should better judge his work by his 36 films which, unfortunately, are practically unknown to Soviet cinemagoers.

S. Irodov,
NT correspondent
DELHI

meeting with Estonian and American children of the same age, and sightseeing tours of Moscow are only a few of the measures carried out by Teresa. Over the past six months the company has entertained about 1,000 disabled children.

A short while ago, Teresa decided to combine its efforts with those of 15 other charity organizations in different cities and form an international association, "I See the World." The first, constituent meeting of the association took place in Moscow at the end of last year. The association has ambitious plans. It is going to build children's rehabilitation centres, draw up new tourist routes, and find work for disabled children.

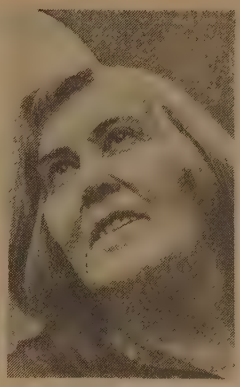
A. Pyasetskaya

* * *

Among Italian scientists there is a woman whose position is envied by men. **Margherita Hack,** 69, is perhaps the most famous astronomer in the country. She heads the university department of astronomy, the only one in Italy, and is one of the few women in the world who direct the work of an observatory.

Though Margherita is absorbed in her scientific work, she is not one of those who are "up in the clouds," as Italians say. She is fond of sports – swimming, running and even playing volleyball. Margherita goes to her office and returns home only on a bicycle. Once she was Italy's high-jump champion and a member of the national track and field athletics team.

In 1963, Margherita Hack won the competition for the post of director of the Trieste astronomic observatory and since then, for almost 30 years now, she has headed this respectable research institution.



As a scientist, the famous Italian woman is concerned about the present disastrous state of the earth's atmosphere. The astronomers working in European observatories, she says, are simply unable to conduct observations of the sky and examine stars even on bright nights because the industrial pollution of the air makes their efforts futile.

A specialist in astrophysics, Margherita does not believe in astrology, the influence of the Moon on human activity, the existence of unidentified flying objects and comets with a radiation effect. "A considerably greater influence is exerted on us by other factors, such as the character of a person and the state of his health, the environment, culture and thousands of other things," she says.

* * *

At the time when semi-official music sank into

oblivion, the compositions of **Sergei Banevich,** 50, did not share the same fate. Practically nothing of what he composed during 30 years of his life has been forgotten.

A son of the leader of an orchestra, evacuated to Perm during the war, Sergei began to study at a music school after his family returned to Leningrad. He studied in the class conducted by Galina Ustvolskaya, an outstanding but little known composer, and graduated from the Leningrad conservatory.

After early experiments in radio opera, Banevich composed quite mature opuses, such as operas *The Lonely Sail Shows White, Ferdinand the Splendid, The History of Kai and Gerda,* musicals *Mess-Mend* and *Love Affair on the Waters,* musical comedies *The Staunch Tin Soldier* and *Town in a Snuff-Box.*

Banevich has composed music for many plays and films, including the well-known film *Paganini.* At the time when avant-garde music was in fashion, Banevich was able to preserve the ability for a free and natural musical expression.

Sergei Banevich is now 50. He looks apathetic and tired. But sometimes he changes and experiences a short harmony with himself and the world.

D. Kadantsev

A treasurer, financier and patron

"We have pegged the virgin land and there remains to plough it." Such is the motto of **Igor Petrov,** 29, a new-generation entrepreneur and president of Bonus Inc., the first financial corporation in Latvia. Petrov's company does not seek economic power in the republic. However, its president wants to build a structure capable of influencing the expansion of commerce and stabilization of the economic situation in Latvia.

Igor Petrov came to Riga from Kamchatka 11 years ago with a suitcase packed with salmon (what else could he bring from the Far East?). He wanted to learn the profession of a wireless mechanic. But soon he took an interest in genetic engineering and entered the biological faculty of the Latvian University from which he was drafted into the army. The two years of marching drills and night marches prompted him to renounce the profession of a "butterfly catcher" and choose a profession for a "real man."

Petrov was transferred to the department of economics and began to study accounting. On graduating from the university he worked in the industrial construction bank of Latvia. Every day up to 16 million rubles passed through his hands. He regarded the batches of banknotes as bricks, fearing that they might get lost somewhere. Once, forgetting the keys from the safe at home, Igor left Riga without money for a day. It was then that honesty, decency and professionalism became his motto.

Leaving the bank a year ago, Petrov and his companions started their own business. They founded a financial and commercial company called Bonus. After the company passed the stage of the initial accumulation of capital it had to decide where to invest money. Bonus supports national sports and took patronage over Latvia's male basketball team. It has established a commercial information agency and launched the newspaper ATB Express, which has the second largest circulation in the republic.

Though it is a long way to rivalry between the financial bosses of Latvia, Igor Petrov is preparing for it. In his opinion, the best method in this rivalry is to be strong. No wonder that oriental wrestling is his favourite sport.

K. Isakov

From underdeveloped socialism to underdeveloped capitalism

Everything taking place in the former Soviet empire now is a reverse motion, an attempt to return 70 years back

Territorial, ethnic and religious conflicts which occurred in the former Tsarist Russia and were suppressed in the period of Communist rule, have come to the surface together with the end of the Cold War and Stalinist repressions.

It is necessary to answer the question: what is the character of the current changes and what is the socio-economic content of the revolutions in the new independent states formed on the territory of the former USSR? It would be unduly superficial to say that they are anticommunist. The question is primarily of formation and consolidation of national states, of the strengthening of political freedoms and the creation of a market economy. In the social aspect the process of the emergence of the middle class is taking place, without which no market economy is possible. The agrarian reform and the handing over of land to peasants is being carried out. From the historical point of view, these changes are specific to bourgeois-democratic revolutions. Thus it has been proved one more time that it is impossible to jump over entire historical periods, otherwise there appears the danger of being thrown back.

In my opinion, the meaning of all these changes is the transition **from underdeveloped socialism to underdeveloped capitalism.** Underdevelopment was and remains the constant value here. I think that future historians will say that the October Revolution of 1917 was actually also a reaction of an underdeveloped country to the growing domination of advanced industrial countries of the West.

Leninism was the strategy of underdevelopment, while Stalinism was an attempt to overcome underdevelopment by force and terror. This gigantic struggle for the overcoming of underdevelopment by means of stepped-up industrialization and collectivization of agriculture better explains the traits of Soviet society than the principles of socialism. The major lesson of this historical experiment is that socialism is incompatible with underdevelopment and that underdeveloped socialism is a caricature of socialism.

Another problem is that of ideology. The crash of Marxism-Leninism has created an ideological vacuum filled now by nationalism and religion.

The former Soviet empire had in fact a colonial structure, and the former union republics were subsystems of the central system. Now they are forced to create their own systems of national statehood. Even Ukraine with its great industrial and agricultural potential has to create its own state structures and army.

So what are the prospects? It's necessary to note while answering this question that the two major tasks – transition to democracy and creation of a market economy – are contradictory. People will hold fast on new rights and freedoms democracy brings them, trying to use them in order to resist the sufferings, privations and social injustice caused by market economy. The first manifestation of this contradiction is the reaction to the unfreezing of prices. It has already led to the fall of the Mazowiecki government in Poland and the Roman government in Romania. At the same time it creates a tendency towards the creation of a more authoritarian system, as witnessed by Lech Valesa's example, because social and ethnic convulsions cannot be deterred by new democratic institutions which are too delicate for that mission.

It took West European countries 200 years to reach the present balance between democracy and a market economy. The new independent states must find a formula for a more authoritarian political system while preventing the latter's becoming a dictatorship unacceptable to them for both internal and external reasons, because without Western help their economic renaissance is inconceivable.

The only trump in possession of Russia and a number of other independent states on the international arena is nuclear weapons. I think that they will use it to urge rich countries to extend them substantial economic aid. The period when M.Gorbachev made concessions to the USA in the sphere of nuclear disarmament without getting anything in exchange is over. I am sure that Mr Yeltsin will display wisdom in relations with Japan, the only country disposing of considerable financial means at present, and will be able to use the problem of the Kuril Islands for that purpose.

I also hope that the independent states of the CIS will avoid repeating the mistake made with regards to the dissolution of the CMEA. There is an inviolable law in world economy, according to which one can't reject a market until it is replaced with a new one. Having rejected the CMEA market, the East European countries were forced to curtail production and reduce export. This is the lesson to be learned by the new independent states.

Drawing from the magazine Viata romaneasca (Romania)

Silviu Brucan,
professor,
political scientist
BUCHAREST

Russian queen of the Guadalupe Valley

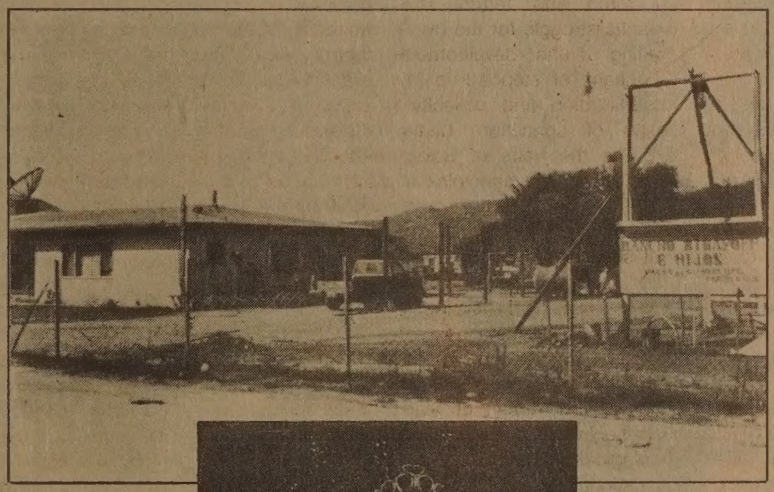
A tow-haired and glaringly freckled boy was strolling along a village street. "What's you name?" I asked him in Russian, after some deliberation. The boy gave me a suspicious look, stopped sipping his coke, and quickened his pace. Everything seemed to fall in with my expectations: a huge advertisement of a well-known wine-bottling company to which Russian colonists were selling grapes they farmed, a road sign announcing "Guadalupe Valley," and, of course, that so un-Mexican-like boy. I caught up with the boy and asked about my present whereabouts in Spanish. This time, he was more disposed to talk and pointed out the house of the village headman, Andrei Samodurov. Speaking in the local variant of Spanish, the boy told me that though his mother was Russian, neither her nor he spoke that language.

I found Andrei Samodurov seated at the head of the table eating, from a large mug, okroshka (cold soup with chopped vegetables and meat) and washing it down with red wine. Upon greeting the man, I asked him – to be on the safe side – in Spanish: which language he would prefer. "Either will do," he said in Russian.

Russians resettled to the Mexican state of Lower California from Los Angeles, early in this century. As a matter of fact, they fled to the USA because they wanted to avoid being drafted into the army in their home-country, Russia, as they were molokans and their religion forbade them from killing, as well as tobaco or alcohol. Surely, they were given a hard time back in Russia, because of these prohibitions. They bought 5,000 hectares of land in the Guadalupe Valley, near the Pacific shore, and started farming. They became prosperous, since Russian peasants still knew how to work hard back in those times.

Andrei Samodurov was born in the Valley. He attended local school built by the molokans but staffed by Mexicans. His wife is Russian (in those times, the colonists never married out). However, their children – all six of them – married Mexicans. They don't speak Russian, though their exterior is typically Russian. In fact, Andrei's wife, Paranya, picks her Russian words with apparent difficulty, every now and then asking again in Spanish. She told me with pride that her daughter Sonya had been voted the "Beauty Queen of the Guadalupe Valley," at the latest beauty contest.

From 70 families which had come to live here from the USA, only a dozen remained in the Guadalupe Valley. However, even that proved to be sufficient to impart the locality with a distinct Russian colouring.



This ranch is home of Sonya Samodurova, the best-looking girl of the Guadalupe Valley

The Samodurovs' is a typical Russian house of stone. The family is well-to-do but now what you would call rich. Andrei cultivates grapes over 30 hectares of land and hires Mexican hands during harvest time. He himself works from morning till night. In his words, I was lucky to get him at home, because it was Sunday, his only day off. I spotted a much-used old truck parked in the courtyard. I asked this village headman why his house was as modest as it was. Was that because of crop failures?

However, the actual reason was different: discord with local authorities. In their time the first Russian colonists bought the plot in question in the names of three of them and divided it equally among all the families. Later, at the harsh times of the Mexican Revolution, local peasants who were somewhat less well-off than Russians snatched part of the Russian land for their "ejido," collective farm. The then Mexican government winked at the struggle against large land owners and even encouraged it. The Russians brought the matter to court. In line with local customs, the case protracted over many years, complicated by the circumstance that the matter about formal owners of the land was rather intricate. It took the molokans long to regain their possession.

This partially explains the comparatively quick disintegration of the Russian settlement in Mexico. Descendants of the colonists started to forget their language, traditions, and national culture. However, there is a local lore museum in the village, since only recently. Among the exhibits there are peasant household objects and agricultural implements from the turn of the century, as well as documents telling the story of development of this piece of Mexico by Russians.

Russian Mexicans don't maintain any ties with their old country. Speaking to them I didn't feel in them any earning or desire to visit Russia. Only once before did Andrei Samodurov meet compatriots, Russian sailors. It was then that he for the first and only time drank vodka, Russian vodka. "I got belly aches for two days afterwards," he said. He heard something about the Soviet president's involuntary confinement in August, but couldn't recall the president's name.

But in any case, the Samodurovs remain typical Russians because of their ready hospitality, which is perhaps the only trait which makes them different from local Mexicans.

Yuri Kudimov,
NT correspondent,
ENSENADA–MEXICO CITY

Editor's guests

who came in from the cold and wouldn't leave

"How did you dare raise your hand against our leader whom we adore? Who paid you? Who gave you the information? We know who you work for!"

A dozen people wearing badges of the great leader Kim Il Sung crowded our small editorial reception room.

"Who permitted you to interfere with our affairs?"

Several dear guests flanked me, and in no time I found myself in a friendly circle.

"You'll answer for having insulted our leader!"

A couple of tough guys approached me with their fists ready. Fortunately enough, a friendly conversation didn't take place – the secretary brought from downstairs the guardsman on duty at the entrance to our magazine's building. Publishers are forced to take security measures nowadays. The coming of a fair-haired youth two metres high and wearing the special task force uniform calmed down the gallant ministers of the North Korean leader's cult. A word of command sounded in the Korean language and the circle broke, the guests forming a habitual rank. The senior of the group stepped forward.

"How could a journalist dare to slander the glorious and industrious Korean people, the prosperous Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the great leader Kim Il Sung and the beloved leader Kim Jong Il?"

It was a standard monologue I knew only too well from the previous visit by the North Korean friends. They cropped up on the premises of our editorial board a weak before and demanded a meeting with our Editor-in-Chief and then expressed the desire to see "the miserable mercenary of South Korean militarists who are pawns of American imperialists."

I was faced then by two functionaries from the North Korean embassy who wanted to know who had supplied me with the material for articles on the situation in North Korea and, without waiting for an answer, made a diagnosis that I had sold myself to South Korea.

On February 16 Kim Jong Il, beloved leader of the North Korean people and the successor to Kim Il Sung turned fifty. His admirers in Moscow evidently commemorated the glorious jubilee by visitting the *New Times* office

To tell the truth, I had something to answer. A two-week trip around North Korea was more than enough to understand that the great leader Kim Il Sung had created a gigantic concentration camp the size of an entire country. Amnesty International and other human rights organizations have gathered a large amount of documents testifying to the tragedy of the North Korean people. However, the diplomats needed no answers.

One of them assumed the role of interpreter and really tried to convey his colleague's words, but, as it turned out, the latter spoke Russian not worse than the "interpreter" and corrected him every now and then. The "interpreter" meticulously committed to paper – not my answers, of course, but his superior's monologues.

This was the usual scenario. North Korean diplomats always come in pairs with an "interpreter" whose Russian is always very poor. Those who know the North Korean ways insist that the "interpreter" has quite a different mission – that of reporting to the embassy whether his superior performed his mission of propagating the great leader's ideas properly.

In recent years the functionaries of the North Korean embassy in Moscow have had more work than ever before: practically all Russian press describes the situation in North Korea in the most outspoken way. Every such publication is regarded in Pyongyang as a malicious attrack upon Kim Il Sung and a diplomatic failure.

I have no idea of how such failures are punished, but every time new people come to rebuff "malicious attacks."

This time the diplomatic visit did not close the case. Evidently, our last publications about North Korean agents committing acts of terror (a passenger aircraft exploded incurring 115 dead; an explosion in Burma's capital killing 21) and about Kim Il Sung handing over the power to his son to control the country were considered in Pyongyang as outrageous. This is why they sent the tough guys with the good-natured faces of North Korea's security service people so memorable after the unforgettable Pyongyang trip...

I listened to North Korean friends attentively, though it would have been more natural to reach for the phone when the premises are invaded by people who want to stage a scandal.

However, this was a special case: brawling and threatening were foreign citizens.

Our press has already written that the agents of North Korean secret services feel at home in Russia and control every move of North Koreans working here, punishing the offenders severely.

Perhaps, the habitual freedom from responsibility and our authorities' connivance encourage the agents, and they came to the conclusion that they had the right to act similarly with regard to our citizens too.

Isn't it the time for Russia's Foreign Ministry and the newly created Ministry of Security to dispell this illusion and explain to the North Korean diplomats the rules of behaviour abroad?

"And if we give you a good thrashing in the street, will you dare write again?" inquired one of the guests.

I will have to take a course in Tae Kwon Do.

Leonid Mlechin

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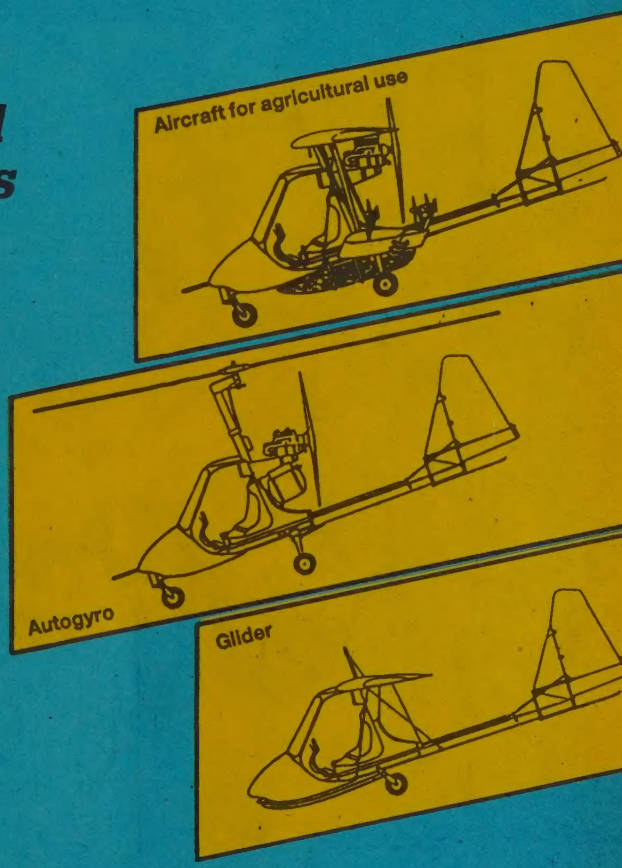

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